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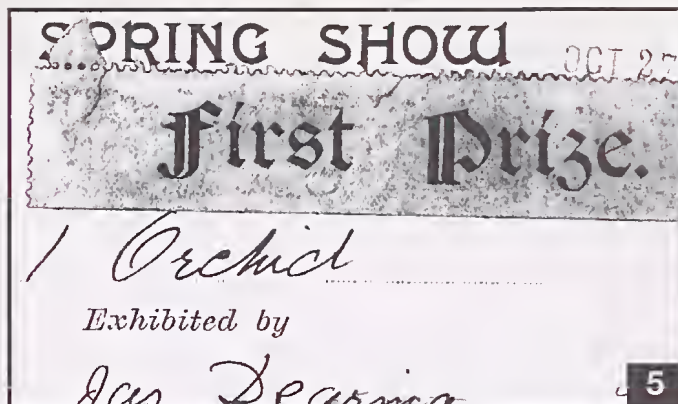
Exotic and Mysterious

Helen Botham
Stuart Read
Zeny Edwards
Christine Reid
Review:

Orchids at Rippon Lea
The mysterious Mr Shelley
Spring celebration at Eryldene
Peter Adams and his garden
Peter Valder's The Gardens of China



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SOCIETY



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The Australian Garden History Society will be the leader in concern for and conservation of significant cultural landscapes and historic gardens through committed, relevant and sustainable action.

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Cover Margot Knox, artist and garden maker. Photo: John Hay. From <i>The Open Garden</i> by Neil Robertson and Louise Earwaker (Allen & Unwin, 2000). Used with permission.	

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By Ken Duxbury



2002: self-sown Cootamundra wattle (*Acacia baileyana*) growing on a dry and inhospitable embankment immediate adjacent to Hurstbridge railway station.
Photo: Ken Duxbury

Out of the garden and into the bush

I was interested in the articles about 'bush gardens' in the May/June issue of *Australian Garden History*. No mention was however made of the fact that there has been a two-way exchange between gardens and the bush.

Many of the best-loved and most widely grown native plants have shown an alarming propensity to invade and radically alter the character and floristic composition of nearby areas of indigenous vegetation. This has been especially apparent throughout the Shire of Nillumbik (on the north-eastern fringe of metropolitan Melbourne) which incorporates the 'bushland' residential areas of Eltham. There, from the late 1950s until the early 1980s native gardens composed of plants originating from all over Australia, but including few if any species indigenous to the local area, were not the exception but the rule.

The native pest plants of Nillumbik

Since the mid-1980s the Eltham and Nillumbik local councils have encouraged the use of locally indigenous plants propagated from locally gathered seed and an increasing number of recently fashionable plants are included on the Council Pest List - for instance almost all of these species were widely planted in bush gardens, used for windbreaks on rural properties and for screening around quarries, tips and commercial and industrial sites.

Cootamundra Wattle	<i>Acacia baileyana</i>
White Sallow Wattle	<i>Acacia floribunda</i>
Sticky Wattle	<i>Acacia howittii</i>
Coast/Sallow Wattle	<i>Acacia longifolia</i> var. <i>longifolia</i>
Ovens Wattle	<i>Acacia pravissima</i>
Wirilda	<i>Acacia retinoides</i> var. <i>retinoides</i>
Golden-wreath Wattle	<i>Acacia saligna</i>
Sugar Gum	<i>Eucalyptus cladocalyx</i>
Grevillea hybrid	<i>Grevillea juniperinum victoriae</i>
Rosemary Grevillea	<i>Grevillea rosmarinifolia</i>
Willow-leaf Hakea	<i>Hakea salicifolia</i>
Dusky Coral Pea	<i>Kennedia rubicunda</i>
Giant Honey Myrtle	<i>Melaleuca amillaris</i> ssp. <i>amillaris</i>
Bluebell Creeper	<i>Sollya heterophylla</i>

Although most of the native pest plants were not widely grown in Nillumbik before the 1950s, some of the worst environmental problems have arisen from earlier plantings. At Hurstbridge the character of large areas of bushland has been totally transformed by invading Cootamundra Wattle (*Acacia baileyana*) and Early Black Wattle (*Acacia decurrens*). These species were probably first planted in the early 20th century when Hurstbridge was a popular destination for 'wattle blossom viewing' excursions. Special trains operated on the new Hurstbridge line (completed in 1913), and postcards featuring wattles were sold. Sugar gums planted along the boundaries and driveways of rural properties and along the route of the old Maroondah aqueduct have also proved highly invasive of adjacent bushland.

Significant environmental degradation has also arisen due to hybridisation between cultivated native species and locally indigenous bushland plants. The genus *Grevillea* is remarkable for the large number of distinctive local varieties that exist from many widely-distributed species, and also for the way in which hybrids between species, as well as between forms and varieties of the

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Wattle Blossom, Hurst Bridge, Victoria.

This postcard probably dates from about 1914, shortly after the opening of the new railway line extension to Hurstbridge which greatly contributed to the township's popularity as a destination for wattle viewing excursions. The postcard appears to show a Cootamundra wattle but it is just possible that the tree might be a silver wattle or late black wattle.

Postcard c. 1914 from the Ken Duxbury Postcard Collection

same species, are freely formed. These characteristics have helped make grevilleas an exceptionally versatile and decorative garden plant.

Unfortunately this proclivity for promiscuous 'misgeneration' has also led to the unique and distinctive character of some natural populations of grevilleas being eroded by genetic exchanges with cultivated plants. At Hurstbridge a distinctive local population of grevilleas, formerly identified as *Grevillea glabella* but now considered to be a form of *Grevillea rosmarinifolia*, has interbred with cultivated forms.

The result is that nobody really knows, or can ever know, just what the original population of the plant looked like – especially as far as its natural range of colour variations and growth habit characteristics are concerned. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the cultivated forms of grevilleas are generally taller and more vigorous than the local form which tends to be smothered or crowded out.

The local (Plenty and Yarrambat) form of Yellow Gum (*Eucalyptus leucoxylon* ssp. *connata*) has the potential to hybridise with several widely cultivated non-local forms of Yellow Gum. This could have a detrimental impact on the exceptionally significant environmental values of Plenty Gorge Park.

Sadly, there appears to be no simple solution to the problems caused by invasive native plants. It would not be practicable to remove all existing potentially invasive planting. Efforts by the former Eltham Council to pass a local law restricting the sale and planting of some of the most invasive species of native and exotic pest plants met with such hostile public reaction that it was abandoned.

Nillumbik Council's existing policy of public education to discourage the use of invasive plants (both native and exotic) and to encourage use of locally indigenous species may lead to a gradual reduction of cultivated invasive plants. Efforts are also being made to remove self-sown pest plants from both public and private land.

The special significance of Eltham's bush gardens

A further complication is that Eltham is of special interest to garden historians as arguably the bush garden capital of Australia, and the home and major workplace of several key figures of the 'environmental living' and 'bush garden' movements including Alistair Knox and Gordon Ford.

Furthermore an exceptionally high proportion of Eltham's bush gardens still survive and retain much of their original character when bush gardens in other parts of Melbourne have long since

been grubbed out and replaced by sasanqua camellias, miniature box hedges, 'Iceberg' roses and Manchurian pears. If all potentially invasive plants were removed from Eltham's bush gardens their character would be greatly changed and in the case of the Gordon Ford Garden, there would be hardly a tree or shrub left standing.

In some circumstances such as 'structural' or 'backdrop' planting it is often possible to replace invasive species with locally indigenous or other non-invasive native species. However for finely detailed and 'accent' planting where leaf shape and texture, and flower size and colour may be of key importance, even relatively minor changes can greatly alter the character and atmosphere of the garden and its design.

Every case needs to be treated on its merits having regard to the historical and aesthetic significance of the garden, its proximity to areas of native bushland and the means by which different species of environmental weeds are disseminated.

An overview

Although I have focussed on the role of native plants as environmental weeds, it must be remembered that every era of garden history has made a contribution to the list of bushland invaders including:

- hedging plants used by early farmers and orchardists: boxthorn, gorse and hawthorn
- popular garden plants of the Victorian era: ivy, holly, English oak, Common Elm, Blue Periwinkle, Common Violet and Belladonna Lily
- plants popular in the earlier part of the 20th century: Desert Ash, several species of cotoneaster and pyracantha and Bulbal Watsonia
- more recent introductions are already demonstrating invasive potential: Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum alopecuroides*) which is sometimes planted in native or locally indigenous gardens in the mistaken belief that it is of Australian origin!

These are only a very small selection of the deliberately planted species that have become seriously invasive environmental weeds. Unfortunately, although fashions in garden plants are often transient, the repercussions which pest plants have upon bushland areas do not fade away, but continue to reverberate and become more intense, more pervasive and more destructive over time.

It is vitally important to have a careful regard for potential environmental weed issues, both in managing existing gardens and when preparing lists for the gardens of the future. Far too many disastrous mistakes have already been made.

- 1 Nillumbik Shire Live Local, Plant Local, Version 3 January 2001. This 60-page booklet can be obtained free of charge from the Shire of Nillumbik. Many other Shire Councils in the Greater Melbourne area have prepared similar documents relating to locally indigenous plants and/or the impact of environmental weeds.

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Foreman, D.B. and Walsh, N.G. *Flora of Victoria, Volume 1: Introduction*, Inkata Press (Melbourne and Sydney) 1993; especially Chapter 11: 'Exotic Flora or Victoria and its Impact on Indigenous Biota' by G.W. Carr.

Ken Duxbury has a special interest in the Nillumbik area where he worked as an environmental and development planner in the early 1990s.



Agreacum sesquipedale. Benjamin Nathan's own photographic record reflects the pride he had in his collection of rare orchids. Courtesy Rippon Lea archives.



Sir Frederick Sargood, first importer of orchids to Rippon Lea.
Photo: By permission of the National Library of Australia.



Mr Benjamin Nathan c.1920s.
Courtesy Rippon Lea archives.

Pleasure in Exotic Treasures

by Helen Botham

It is difficult for us, today, to understand the emotion a new species must have aroused, half-glimpsed in the undergrowth, after weeks of trekking in a territory where no European, and frequently no human being—had ever trod.¹

Luigi Berliocci in his book *The Orchid in Lore and Legend* describes the passion that drove the orchid hunters, and their patrons back in Europe, to undertake ever more dangerous missions to the far corners of the world seeking out exotic species of orchids.

Only the wealthy could afford to mount the expeditions to discover these exotic plants, and then to house and maintain them in Europe. Berliocci says the great and wealthy 'vied in the building of glasshouses to shelter their burgeoning and increasingly fabulous collections.'

A passionate interest

The search for new species extended to native Australian orchids. In 1875, the first number of Robert D. Fitzgerald's *Australian Orchids*² was published and it aroused great interest. A large folio form publication with detailed coloured drawings and descriptions of the plants, it was described by Charles Darwin as 'your magnificent work, with its excellent illustrations'.³ The horticultural writer for the *Sydney Mail* 'hoped that Mr Fitzgerald's book will encourage the taste for

the collection of other less conspicuous, but not the less beautiful, species'.⁴ Australian plant hunters took up this challenge and continued their quest.

By mid-nineteenth century the search for new species was reaching fever pitch, and their value to collectors was astronomic. An article titled 'High Prices for Rare Plants' in the *Sydney Mail* reported to Australian readers in 1873:

One of the most remarkable collections of orchids and other rare plants, the property of Mr Sam Mendel, of Manchester, was lately brought to sale. The total sum realised for the orchids alone was £4,361.⁵

At that sale the maximum price for a single specimen was 57 guineas for a 'Cyribidium eburnam' (probably *Cymbidium eburniam*). The writer of the article concludes:

... the high prices actually given for choice and rare flowers has a beneficial effect in promoting botanical research and cultivation, and luxury thus aids in extending these beautiful exotic plants.

Ten years later, as a report in *The Orchid Album* 1883 demonstrates, the value of orchids had increased dramatically:

At a recent sale at Steven's Auction Rooms, [Covent Garden]: Cattleya Trianæ Osmanii 215 guineas, and Cattleya Trianæ Dodgsonii 185 guineas.⁶

An obsessive fever

At this time Melbourne merchant Frederick Sargood was making arrangements to return home to Rippon Lea after an extended visit to England. He had left Melbourne with his nine children in 1880 after the death of his wife, Marian. During his

stay in England he met and married Julia Tomlin. By August 1882, he had collected together all that he felt he needed to import into his already grand mansion and gardens at Rippon Lea, Melbourne.

A significant proportion of these goods indicated that, either during his stay in England or perhaps before his visit, Sargood had caught 'that obsessive and chronic fever that came to be known as orchid mania'.⁷ He had apparently determined to acquire what would be the largest collection of orchids yet to be found in the Australian colonies.

Doubtless Sargood carried out extensive research, and sought advice from experienced orchid growers in order to be equipped for the scheme he had set his heart on. Perhaps he had visited the Manchester Show of Orchids in June 1881, where *Dendrobium thyrsiflorum* (later known to be part of his collection), *Cattleya* sp., *Lælia* sp. and others were exhibited, or the same exhibition in May 1882. His route from London to Manchester might have taken him via the Duke of Devonshire's property, Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of Sargood's plants may have been purchased from the Duke of Devonshire, although this has not been confirmed.

The many species Sargood was to import into Australia had been collected from a range of diverse natural environments—*Odontoglossum alexandræ* from the high altitude forests of Colombia, *Aerides fieldingii* from tropical Burma. The conditions in their native habitat would have to be reproduced in the glasshouses that Sargood had in mind for Rippon Lea. He had to be sure that the equipment he imported would enable his orchid plants to thrive. Glasshouses on the scale Sargood envisaged were not available in Australia at that time.

We know that he brought back with him the major parts of a large conservatory and a further six glasshouses, that featured:

... a centre and lean-to on each side, with partitions across the middle of each ... the ventilators extend continuously from end to end and each line of them can be opened to any extent by a lever. The houses are admirably heated by means of Deard's patent boiler. The whole of the material except the timber and brickwork was imported directly from England. Two gardeners — head gardener and plantsman — were also imported at the same time—together with a very large collection of orchids and other plants.⁸

The head gardener was Adam Anderson, who had been an apprentice at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, renowned for its orchid collection, before working as a gardener at Haddo House in Scotland, and then at Wakefield Lodge in Northamptonshire. We can assume that the 'plantsman' had specific charge of the care of the orchids on the voyage, and subsequently when they arrived in Melbourne.

A notable collection

Sargood had selected a range of genera—amongst them *Cattleya*, *Cypripedium*, (now named *Paphiopedalum*), *Dendrobium*, *Odontoglossum*, *Compasettia*, *Bletia*, and *Lycaste*. In 1883, the Melbourne press reported:

This collection of orchids surpasses by far any other in the colony, and ... contains a larger number of exotic species than there are in the three neighbouring colonies altogether.⁹

The orchids here were magnificent. *Cypripedium lawrencianum*, (now named *Paphiopedalum lawrenceanum*) a native of Borneo—a truly exotic flower in appearance, with its rich green and purple lip, and 'broad white sepals with numerous purplish

veins'¹⁰ and *Odontoglossum alexandræ*, (now named *Odontoglossum crispum* and a native of 'Bogota, New Grenada') described in the *Orchid Album* as 'one of the finest orchids in cultivation' with its 'flowers exquisitely chaste and beautiful, white, tinted with rose, and variously spotted, fully three inches across'.¹¹

Such a range of different genera and species had a variety of requirements for specific levels of warmth, humidity, ventilation and water. They would also require different growing media—at that time materials available were sphagnum moss, peat, fibrous peat, *Osmunda* fibre from Japan, and charcoal. Although the charcoal would provide drainage to some extent, crocking material would have provided the bulk of the necessary drainage. Most orchids require excellent drainage, yet constant moisture during the growing period. It seems that by June 1884 this was well in hand at Rippon Lea as, by then:

... the orchid houses are well filled. These two houses are kept at different temperatures; one being for those requiring great heat, the other for resting, and for cool house species. The plants have hardly recovered from the injury they sustained after their arrival through the absence of a proper house for their location, but they have flowered well.¹²

The orchid collection was supervised for many years by that same head gardener who arrived in 1882, Adam Anderson. He was responsible for the management of the glasshouses and for the overall supervision of a range of gardening staff to maintain them. Not long after Mr Anderson embarked upon his new duties at Rippon Lea he had gained the respect of his gardening colleagues. Amongst many prizes he won at local horticultural shows, were first prizes for orchids at the South Suburban Horticultural Society in 1886, 1887 and 1888: the specimen exhibited in 1888 was '*Lycaste skinneri delicatissima*'.¹³

Adam Anderson not only won awards for his plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables at local horticultural societies, but he was asked to judge the exhibits. He received great support from his employer. Frederick Sargood, elected a Patron of the South Suburban Horticultural Society in 1888, was a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria, and was often invited to open horticultural shows and judge exhibits.

Opportunities were provided for the public to see the collection—Sir Frederick and Lady Sargood held many charity functions when visitors were able to stroll through the grounds and conservatories.

The fete in aid of the Congregational Church, Balaclava, which was given at Rippon Lea, Elsternwick, on Saturday, 7th December, was most successful. The grounds were looking their best after the recent rains, and the hundreds of folk who rambled about them during the afternoon had ample opportunities afforded them of spending a delightful time. The numerous hot houses and ferneries are quite a feature, and the many rare plants displayed in them were novelties to a great many present.¹⁴

After Sir Frederick Sargood's death early in 1903, the contents of the house and conservatories of Rippon Lea were sold at an auction in May 1903. The catalogue of 'Varied and Extensive Collection of Pot Plants' issued by Gemmell, Tuckett and Co. lists many orchid species.



Brassocattleyea heatonensis.
Photo: Benjamin Nathan.
Courtesy Rippon Lea archives.

Aerial view, showing the vast areas of glasshouses at Rippon Lea Estate, taken shortly before dismantling in the early 1950s. The large conservatory, connected to the smaller orchid show house, is opposite the entrance to the house. Courtesy Rippon Lea archives.

The passion continues

Rippon Lea was then sold to a syndicate headed by Sir Thomas Bent, who during the five years before his death in 1909, had sub-divided the estate and sold off a total of seventy-two residential blocks. After that, the purchase of Rippon Lea by Benjamin Nathan, a wealthy Melbourne businessman and owner of Maples Stores, ensured that further planned sub-divisions would not take place and that the estate would again house the largest collection of orchids in Australia. We would have to agree that:

It is gratifying to know that Ripponlea has fallen into the hands of a gentleman who takes a large interest in horticultural matters and who does not spare the money necessary in maintaining and further improving this fine estate.¹⁵

From his previous Melbourne home in Armadale, Mr Nathan moved into Rippon Lea with his family bringing with him his gardener, James Dearing, a well-known figure in Melbourne's horticultural world at the time. James Dearing had already established his credentials as an orchid grower—he had won many awards for his orchids grown at Nathan's Armadale garden, and this trend continued after they moved to Rippon Lea.

In 1914, Nathan employed Arthur Stanley Orchard, a gardener 'renowned for his knowledge of Orchids, tropical and exotic plants'.¹⁶ Orchard had gained his early experience at nurseries and gardens in England, notably at the residence of Mr R.H. Measures, a famed orchid collector and supplier at Streatham, near London. More recently he had been in charge of the orchids and exotic plants of Sir Hugh Dixon at Abergeldie in Sydney.

By 1916, Nathan had built a large conservatory that was a show house for all the best specimens grown in the other glasshouses. This 'really magnificent conservatory ...the largest and handsomest glass-house in Victoria, and perhaps the finest in the Commonwealth' was reported in 1916 as having cost '£2,500, and the staging, fittings, &c., another £500, making a

total of £3,000'.¹⁷ This building, which was connected to a further smaller orchid show house, was boldly sited opposite the front door of the mansion. Nathan encouraged visitors to inspect his magnificent exotic plants, and, in wartime Melbourne, supported the fund-raising efforts of local charities. The *Leader* reported:

The happy idea of turning the beautiful collection of orchids at Ripponlea to practical account in connection with the patriotic funds has been hit upon by Mr and Mrs Nathan.

They welcomed visitors to view their collection:

...at a charge of one shilling between the hours of 2 and 5 on Saturday and Sunday afternoons and the proceeds are being handed to the local branch of the Lady Mayoress's Fund.¹⁸

Nathan obviously valued Orchard's dedication to his work at Rippon Lea. In 1929, he built the entrance lodge at Rippon Lea specifically for him. Also in 1929, Nathan undertook a huge expansion of the area he had under orchid cultivation, building more glasshouses. The *Australian Home Beautiful* reported in 1931:

Under glass at "Rippon Lea" more than 2000 orchids, of several hundred species and varieties, are grown, and the collection is constantly receiving additions—novelties from the great orchid nurseries in England and elsewhere.¹⁹

By 1935, shortly before Nathan's death, the *Home Gardener* was able to report:

This estate and collection are acknowledged to be the finest horticultural feature in the Southern Hemisphere, being 25 acres in extent, and carrying 21 glasshouses, holding a collection of 2,500 Orchids.²⁰

The vast proportions of Nathan's orchid houses seem incredible today. Up to 28 gardeners were employed, most of them occupied with maintaining the glasshouses and their contents: feeding the coke boilers, and regulating the steam, humidity,

ventilation and temperature, as well as propagation and pest control. As the younger gardeners gained experience in the glasshouses, they would have been promoted to a position with responsibility for a number of the houses, thus working their way up the ladder. Orchard was ultimately responsible for the 'ideas regarding the organisation and management that are required in the administration of housing and maintaining such a collection'.²¹

The mystique fades

Nathan died in 1935, and his daughter, Mrs Louisa Jones, inherited the property. Although Louisa Jones enthusiastically maintained the beautiful grounds at Rippon Lea, she had no demonstrated interest in horticultural rarities. During the Second World War, coke supplies were restricted, which would have limited the number of plants that could be kept in the right conditions, and the costs involved in maintaining the plants and their greenhouses became exorbitant.

In the early 1950s, Louisa Jones asked Bob Hodgins, who ran Hodgins' Orchids in Frankston from 1946 until 1996, to suggest a price for the orchids and remove them. He recalls having to walk through the large conservatory to reach the orchids that were still kept in the orchid show house. He housed them for a short time at his nursery, then sold them on to other orchid growers, mainly in Sydney. Bob Hodgins recalls that even at that time, despite the fact that the number of plants may well have been reduced during the war, the collection was probably the largest in Australia. After the plants were removed, the glasshouses were dismantled.

One of the Rippon Lea conservatories was re-erected in Caulfield Park, on the corner of Balaclava and Hawthorn roads. Solomon states that 'Every pane of glass and every part of the framework was individually numbered before removal to ensure accurate reconstruction. However, this conservatory was destroyed by fire in 1977 and replaced by the present hothouse.'²² Robert Sands says that 'Council officers believe that the brickwork and iron beams of the glasshouse are original, salvaged from the fire.'²³ Sands found that the ironwork in photographs of a conservatory taken in 1933 matches the ironwork of the conservatory currently in Caulfield Park.

Louisa Jones sold another glasshouse to the then Caulfield Council 'complete with benches and pipes' for £250 in 1949.²⁴ Two glasshouses, believed to have been imported by Sir Frederick Sargood in 1882, were reassembled in 1954 at Kirksley Orchid Nursery, run by Alexander Kirkbright in Coolangatta Road, Camberwell. They are still there today, although now in poor repair, and Kirkbright's daughter Marjorie maintains an orchid collection there.

The history of orchid growing at Rippon Lea from 1882 to the 1950s could be seen to reflect changing social attitudes over that period. In Sargood's time the novelty and rarity of newly discovered species, and the cost of mounting expeditions to search for them, inflated the cost of these plants. Only the wealthy could then afford to create and maintain the conditions required for them to flourish, and ownership of such a collection carried with it an elevated social status.

After the end of the Second World War, new techniques for hybridisation meant that new cultivars, more tolerant of a range of environments, were being developed, and the prices paid for these plants gradually reduced. Berliocci says 'Many modern hybrids are far more tolerant than their parents and forbears: well-chosen grexes and clones of *Cymbidium*, *Dendrobium* ... *Odontoglossum*, *Oncidium*, *Paphiopedalum* ... can be used as houseplants with minimal fuss.'²⁵

While the labour costs involved in maintaining glasshouses was mounting, many home gardeners now had more leisure time and could maintain their own collections of these magnificent plants. Modern technology enabled enthusiasts to establish and maintain appropriate growing conditions with relative ease. Orchid growing was now no longer exclusively for the professional employees of the wealthy. Whereas previously many horticultural societies had been dominated by



Exterior of hot houses at Rippon Lea c. 1902.
From *Garden Gazette*, July 1902. Courtesy Rippon Lea archives.



Interior of Orchid Show House.
From the *Australasian*, 19 December 1925.

professional gardeners, amateur growers were now establishing specialist orchid societies. So the adventure, the cost, and the social cachet previously associated with orchid growing and collecting were steadily broken down. The mystique surrounding plants, only recently introduced into horticulture from foreign lands and brought to Australia by Sir Frederick Sargood, had faded.

However, the exotic nature of these plants still generates a passion and enthusiasm amongst those who continue to collect and grow them; much of this enthusiasm focussing on the need for the conservation of these magnificent species.



2002 - Gerald McCraith, A.M., Founder and Executive Director of the Australian Orchid Foundation, with a specimen of *Lycaste skinneri*, thought to have been grown at Rippon Lea and now part of his collection in Melbourne.
Photo: Helen Botham

Acknowledgments

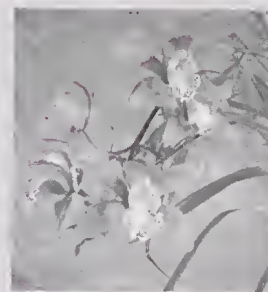
I am indebted to Richard Heathcote and Richard Aitken for their interest, encouragement and assistance in my pursuit of the history of orchids at Rippon Lea.

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Helen Botham is a volunteer researcher for the National Trust (Victoria) at Rippon Lea. She plans to continue research into orchids at Rippon Lea and hopes that this article might trigger the memories of some readers which will lead to answers for many unresolved questions.

Coda: Orchids return to Rippon Lea

The current Head Gardener at Rippon Lea, Philip Tulk, remembers visiting Kirksley Orchid Nursery and buying his first orchids there.



Under his direction, a representative orchid collection is being acquired for Rippon Lea with the aim of re-establishing this important facet of both the Sargood and Nathan eras.

The Southern Suburbs Orchid Society in Victoria is supporting Rippon Lea in its quest. It will hold a display of many old orchid species at **Primavera**, a celebration of spring at Rippon Lea, on 14 and 15 September, 2002. These exotic plants will soon make their new home in the conservatory at Rippon Lea, and will be available for visitors to see.

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Eryldene, 1923. Photo: Harold Cazneaux. Courtesy Eryldene Trust.



*Professor E.G. Waterhouse at Eryldene
Photo: Tony Strachan.
Courtesy Eryldene Trust.*



*A group of iris, heliopterum and anemones
in the garden at Eryldene c. 1923.
Photo: Harold Cazneaux. Courtesy
Eryldene Trust.*

The Linguist and the Garden by Zeny Edwards

Eryldene is a property full of interest for its camellia collection, the house designed by William Hardy Wilson and the work of a passionate amateur gardener. Newly discovered documents add to its fascinating story.

When researching this article I read in *The Union Recorder* that Professor E. G. Waterhouse gave a lecture on 'Landscape and Domestic Gardening' in the Economics Room of Sydney University in September 1930. What was remarkable about this fact was that at that time there was no institution in Sydney offering a course of Landscape Gardening and Design and that Professor Waterhouse, trained in modern languages rather than landscaping, would deliver the lecture with such knowledge and confidence to an eager and receptive audience.

At that lecture he showed lantern slides – first of a newly laid-out garden, bare of vegetation. He then showed its progression of plantings - with hydrangeas on either side of the steps leading to the verandah, then with flower borders from the front gate. These were flanked on either side by lawn furnished with white-painted Lutyenesque garden seats, and later with more plantings of trees and shrubs grouped artistically, and supplemented with tubs and 'vases filled with living things, arranged to fall thickly down one side and flow along the ground'.

Professor Waterhouse never told the audience that he was showing slides of Eryldene, his own house and garden in Gordon, Sydney, designed in 1913 by his friend William Hardy Wilson, and its evolution into a domestic garden in his hands. The main point of his lecture was that no detail of landscape should be treated in isolation but 'that the arrangement of trees, shrubs and flower-beds must be subordinated to the main scheme so as to produce a general unity of effect'. Most importantly, he showed that the art of gardening takes time and practice to perfect.

My discovery of the professor's gardening notebook dated 1914-1917 reiterated this patient application of gardening ideas. In it he listed the perennials, bulbs and annuals that he would plant in the front borders, painstakingly noting the colour scheme and tracking the growth habit and characteristic of the plants as they grew. His larkspurs were 'good' but his hollyhocks succumbed to rust. His single dark blue anemones were 'fine', 'Blue Gem' nemesisias were 'slow in coming', and the nemophilas were 'short-lived'.

What was apparent from reading the notes is that Waterhouse was just like any other keen gardener, willing to try the latest plant releases and to mix and match natives with exotics - Kennedias and waratahs with azaleas, orange nasturtiums and poppies with pinks and sweet-peas. He liked the strong colour of dark blue lobelia and the dwarf dark blue delphinium. His favourite plants were obvious from the very beginning: alyssum, heliotrope, sweet violets, and iris mainly for their leaves, and of course azaleas and camellias.

'Flower Borders at Eryldene' 10.00am to 4.00pm on 21-22 and 28-29 September at 17 McIntosh Street, Gordon.

Cottage plants from collectors and antique books will be on sale during the exhibition and there will also be lectures, floral displays and a consultant 'plant doctor'. Admission: \$10 to aid the conservation of the Eryldene garden.

Zeny Edwards, is an award-winning author of several books on architectural history. Interest in Hardy Wilson intensified in the 1990s when she documented Eryldene and its contents. Her research produced publications, lectures and exhibitions and culminated in the biography: *William Hardy Wilson, Artist, Architect, Orientalist, Visionary* published by Watermark Press, (02 9818 5677) rrp. \$77, winner of the National Trust Heritage Award 2002.

The Mysterious Mr Shelley

By **Stuart Read**



*The Cloister at Boomerang, Billyard Avenue, Elizabeth Bay, 2001.
Photo: Stuart Read.*

Worldwide, people during the early 1930s revelled in the exotic fantasies manufactured by the Hollywood dream factory. However only a fortunate few, the glitterati of the day, could indulge in the glamour. The grim economic reality of the Depression faced most people, particularly those in creative design work. The story of Boomerang and the mystery of Max Shelley recall the dream and the hardships of the era.

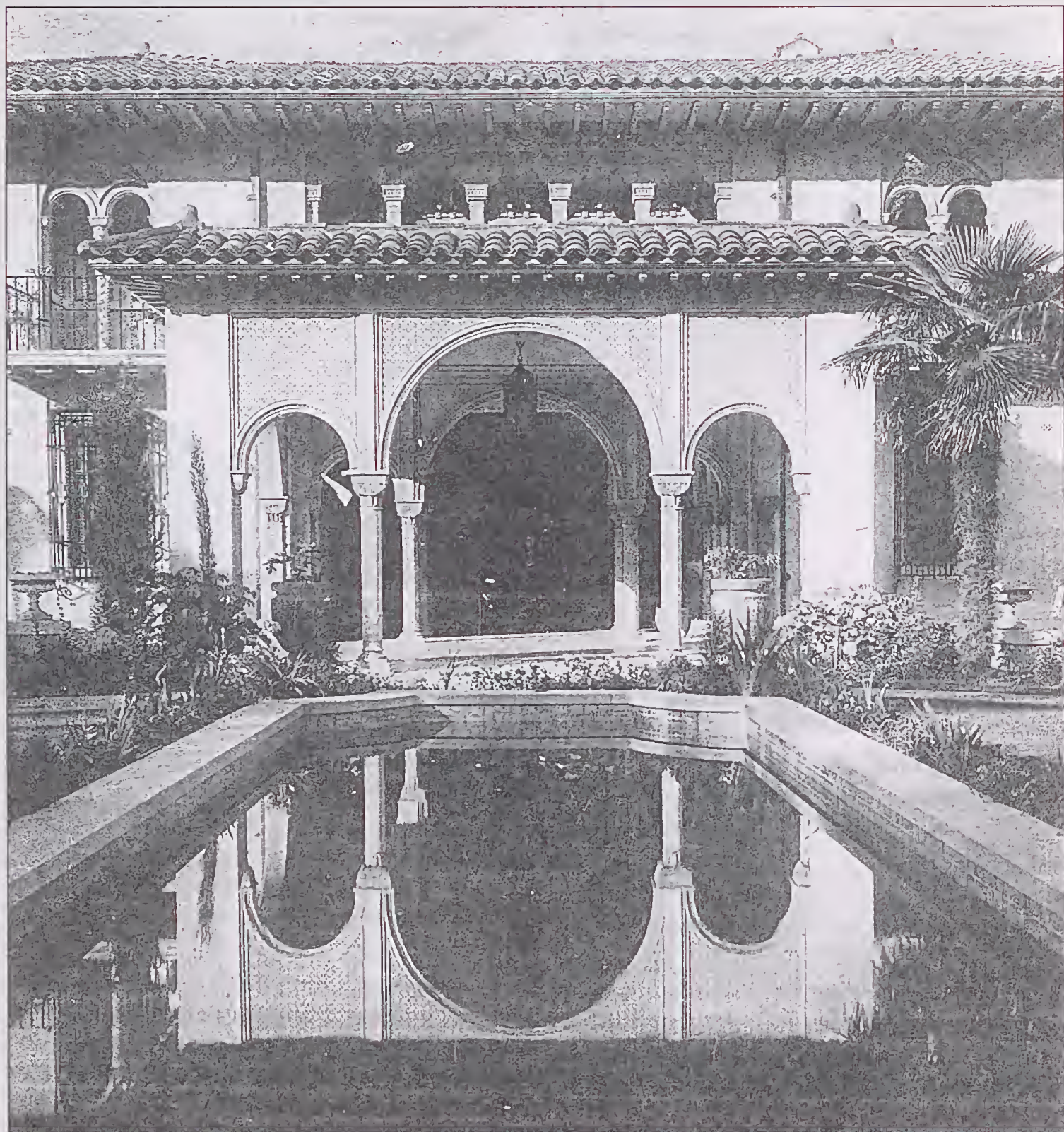
A dream house and garden

Max Shelley was a garden designer and landscape architect active in Sydney in the late 1920s. He designed and laid out the lush grounds of Boomerang, the Spanish Mission style mansion of sheet music mogul Frank Albert. Situated in Billyard Avenue, Elizabeth Bay, Boomerang was itself designed by English architect Neville Hampson. Built in 1926, the garden was featured in an article by Nora Cooper in *The Home*, 1 February 1929, with photographs by Harold Cazneaux.

Cooper noted that the grounds were "by the well-known Sydney garden designer M.R.Shelley". Clearly based on Hollywood mansion grounds of the era, Boomerang was well known in Sydney high society for quite some time, the scene of much entertaining and subsequent land speculation. Its gardens, then quite open, but now quite enclosed, were and are a key part of its charm, evoking the Alhambra, the Riviera, monastic cloisters and the Hollywood style favoured by the 'jet set' of the time.

The house was constructed on the site of an earlier Boomerang, one of a row of Edwardian homes built on an 1875 subdivision of Elizabeth Bay House estate, Colonial Secretary Alexander Macleay's grand gardenesque folly, widely considered "the finest house and garden in the colony". Boomerang today retains a mango and an avocado tree of generous proportions, probably from the Macleay estate's orchard. A venerable camellia may also be a survivor, and reputedly there are a black bean and a Norfolk Island hibiscus from the estate, but I could not find these on a 2001 visit.

Mr A J Doust, a landscape gardener advertising from Bond Street, Sydney and active in the Eastern Suburbs slightly later than Shelley, is also known to have worked on Boomerang, perhaps on its maintenance or adaptation as the plantings matured. Nora Cooper featured some examples of Doust's work in articles for *the Home* in 1930.



The Blue Mirror

This and the following pages represent a series of Cazneaux studies of the exterior of "Boomerang," Mr. Frank Albert's newly constructed home at Billyard Avenue, Elizabeth Bay, Sydney. The above photograph shows the large fish pool of blue tiles, surrounded by German irises and amaryllis, which lies at the Billyard Avenue entrance of the house. Mr. M. R. Shelley, the well-known Sydney garden-designer, is responsible for the planning of the grounds.

Text (probably) by Nora Cooper. Image by Harold Cazneaux, photographer, as published in *The Home*, 2/1929.



The 'blue pool' 2001. Earlier plantings have been reinforced with fan palms, cypresses and palms. Photo: Stuart Read.



Boomerang 2001. Note large mango and avocado trees (Macleay's) out the front. Photo: Stuart Read.



Boomerang 1929. The cloister garden looking north with beds of fuchsias, hydrangeas, lilioms, and cotton lavender. A Spanish tiled pool is sheltered by four Abyssinian bananas. Photo: Harold Cazneaux as published in *The Home* 2/1929.



Boomerang - the Harbour Frontage 1929. Note the NZ cabbage trees in pots (*Cordyline australis*). Photo: Harold Cazneaux as published in *The Home* 2/1929.



The Harbour Frontage, August 2001, showing remnants of Max's original overall layout, planting and detail, minus cruciform paths to north, now a swimming pool. Photo: Stuart Read.

Max Shelley

Max Robert Shelley was born in Gladesville in 1895, son of Harry Shelley, merchant of Hunters Hill. He was the youngest of three boys.

In World War 1, from 1915-18, he served in the 10th, 3rd and 4th Battalions AIF, was lightly wounded in France and transferred to the Air Corps (the Air Force was not created until 1921 after he was demobbed in 1918). In 1919 he got his first job as a clerk at a sugar mill in Harwood on the Macleay River in northern NSW, but then left and returned to Sydney.

In 1922 he married Maude Phillips, living first briefly in a cottage on Fern Road, Hunters Hill, then in Coolibah, 6 Jenneret Ave, Hunters Hill. Both the Shelleys and the Phillips were long-time Hunters Hill residents - the Shelleys of Essex stock and the Phillips of Welsh stock.

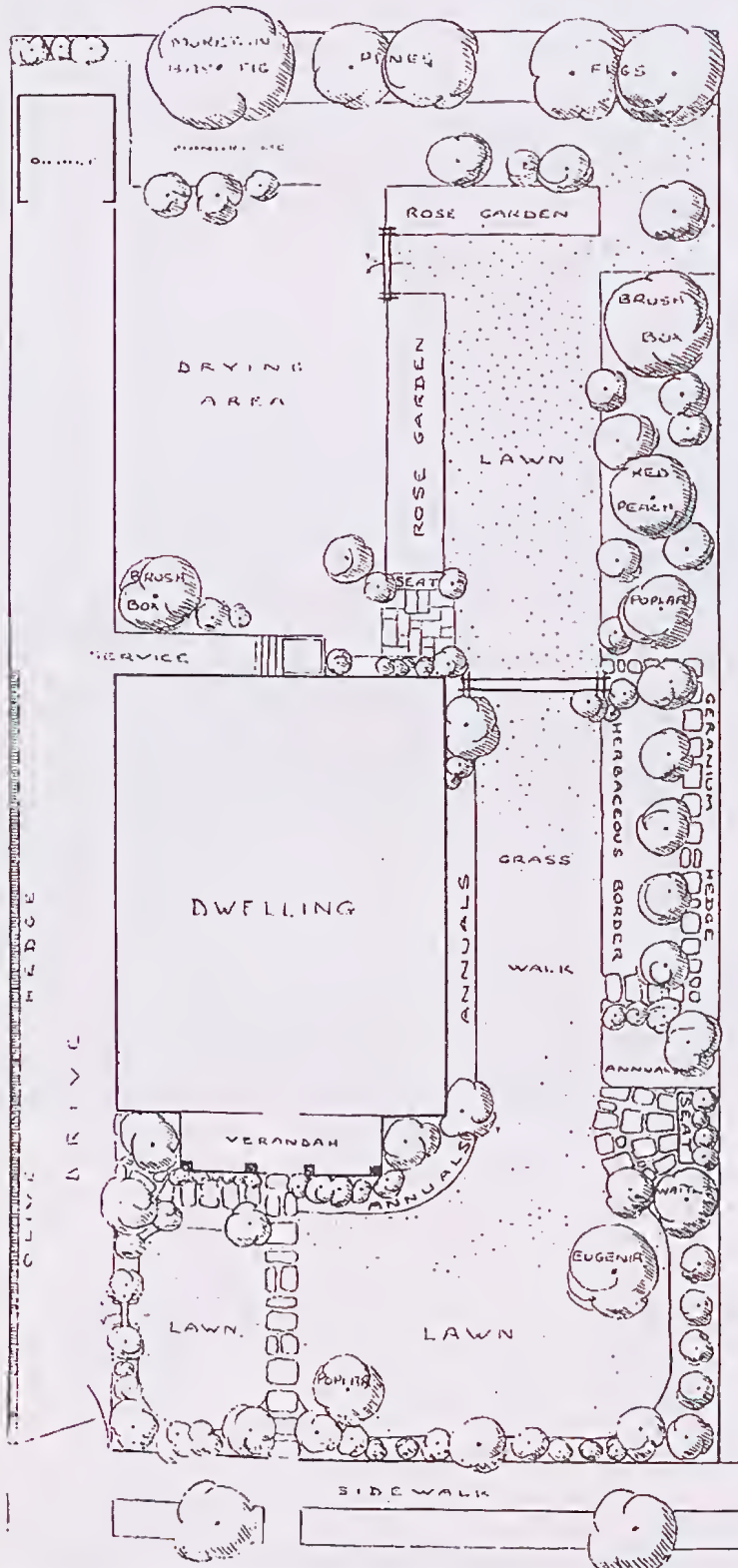
At least from 1926 Shelley had a nursery, and a garden design and contracting practice - "Gardens of Distinction", Hunters Hill, phone number HH329. He advertised in *The Garden* and in *The Commonwealth Home*, in the years 1926-7, and in *The Home* from 1926-30.



Coolibah, Hunters Hill, showing use of window boxes to soften a verandah.



Max Shelley in the 1920s. Photo: Courtesy Mrs Rosemary Ross



Plan of a Max's own garden Coolibah in Hunter's Hill, 1927.

Max was active writing in popular journals of the time. A series of articles with garden plans was published in *The Garden & The Home* during 1926, and there was another series in *The Commonwealth Home* in 1927. 'The Simple Garden of Today' appeared in a 1927 Bebarfalds' publication *Safe Home Planning* and was reprinted in *Garden Gossip*, a weekly magazine, in 1928, and this led to a series in *Garden Gossip* from 1928-9.

From 1927-28 he had a shop-cum-office in Boomerang House (owned by Frank Albert) at 139 King Street, Sydney, phone number MA5375, advertising in *The Home*, 9/1928 as a garden designer, seed and plant expert, and florist. The phone code location is unclear – many Sydney suburbs could be abbreviated to MA.

A garden designer in the Depression

Max and Maude had one daughter, Rosemary, born in February 1929, when they were still living in Coolibah. It appears from an advertisement that before this Max moved shop to 245 Pitt Street (opposite the Lyceum Theatre near today's Hilton Hotel), advertising various plants, wedding bouquets, posies and modern floral work, phone number MA 5375 (*The Home*, 2/1929). He published a *Rose List* from this shop in 1929, and he also offered expert advice on all matters appertaining to landscape gardening, tree and shrub knowledge, and sold penny packet seeds, spring bulbs in bowls and bridal flowers under the banner "knowledge and service".

In November 1930 he was advertising as a florist, still in Pitt Street although his contact number had changed, from MA5376 to FM2164 – the code FM might have stood for Flemington or perhaps Fairfield.



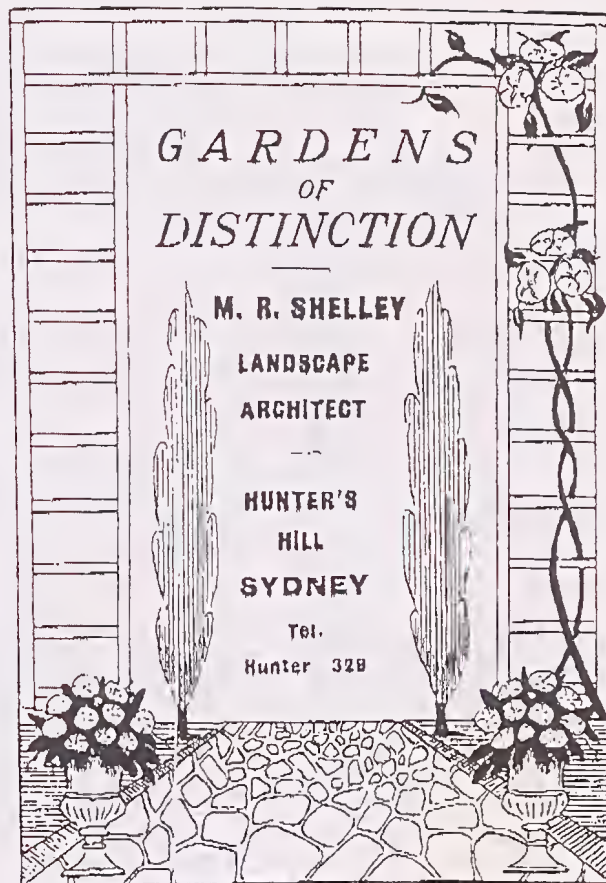
Max and Maude's daughter, Rosemary Ross, Hunters Hill, 2001.
Photo: Stuart Read

In or after 1930 the Shelleys moved to a flat in Bromley on Gladswood Gardens / New South Head Rd, Double Bay, and ran a shop in 'the bay', specialising in interior decorating and soft furnishing, the change perhaps indicating a changing market. Bromley is still there, and Shelley may have influenced its garden, which today has a jacaranda, bangalow palms and lush plantings, and is quite secluded from a very busy road.

Later life

In 1939 he joined the Royal Australian Air Force and was posted to flying training school in 1943-45, moving about the country a lot, principally in Narrandera, also Bundaberg, and Ascot Vale, Brisbane. Promoted to squadron leader, he was demobbed on 9 November 1945.

After World War II Shelley separated from his wife, remained in Sydney, then moved to Adelaide. From 1945 until his death he worked in Adelaide in a nursery at Unley. It is not known if he was publishing at this time, or designing and constructing gardens. He died in 1954 in Adelaide. Maude died in 1987, Shelley women seeming rather stronger than men!



Advertisement from *The Garden*, 1926.



Advertisement from *The Home* 1927.

**A GARDEN BY
SHELLEY
IS DISTINCTIVE**

A skilled organisation for forming and planting large and small gardens.

M. R. SHELLEY
*Garden Designer,
Seed and Plant Expert,
Florist.*

Boomerang House
139 King Street, Sydney.
Tel. MA 5375

Advertisement from *The Home* 1928.

**SEE
MAX
(M. R. SHELLEY)
FOR**

Trees, Shrubs, Roses, Vines, Ornamentals, Berries, Seeds and Plants.

Specialising in Wedding Bouquets, Posies and modern floral work of every description.

MAX
245 PITT STREET
(Opp. Lyceum Theatre) MA 5375.
Seed, Plant & Flower Expert

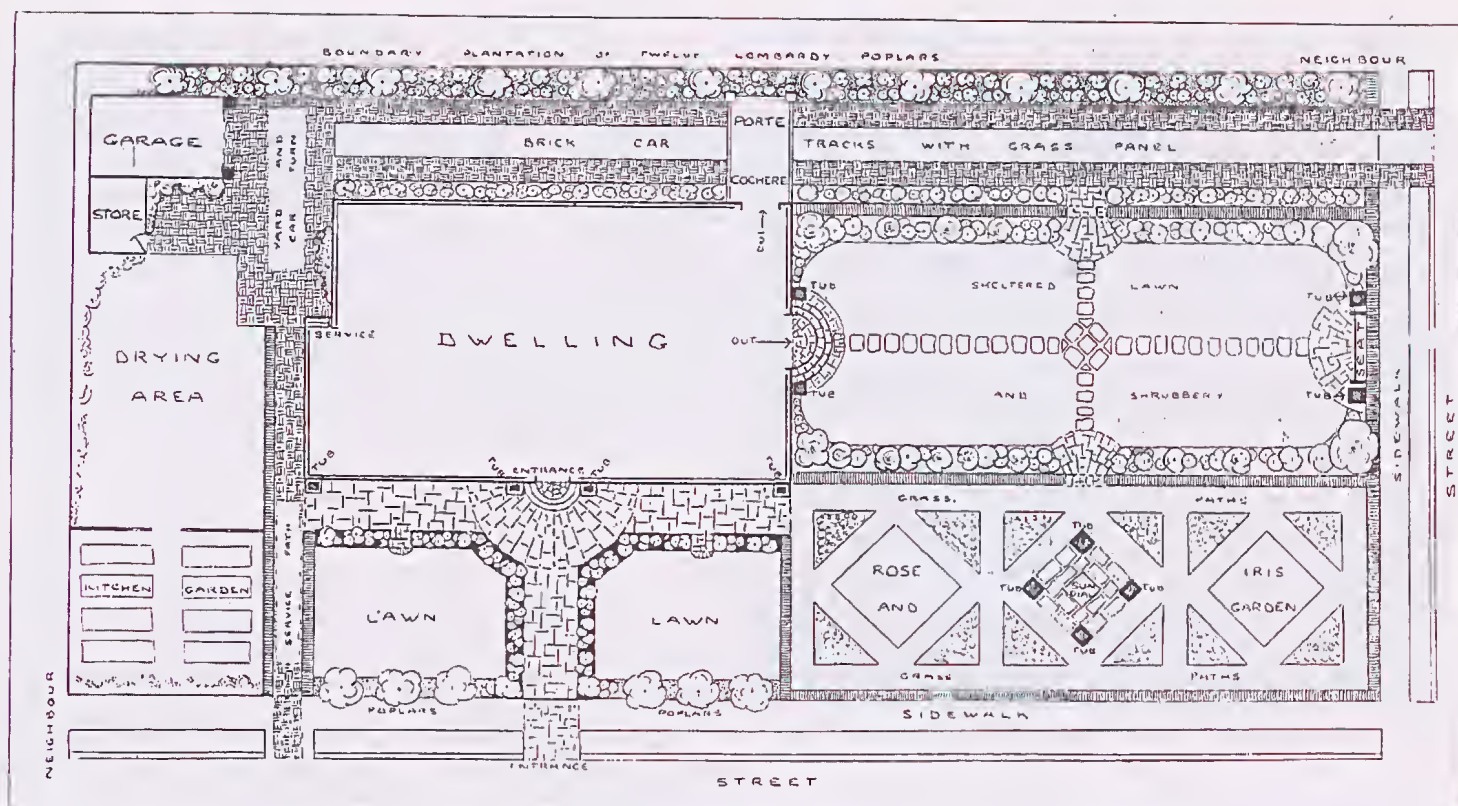
Advertisement from *The Home* 1929.

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CLUSIVE QUALITY
ARE CONCERNED

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(NEAR MARKET ST.)
Phone : MA 5375

Advertisement from *The Home* 1930.



Strong lines and bold layout - two of Max Shelley's formal garden plans. Source: *The Commonwealth Home*, 6/1927

Other Shelley gardens

Apart from Boomerang, little is known of gardens created by Shelley, and of whether they survive intact. From Shelley's own writings it is evident that five other gardens were built. Two, including his own, were in Hunters Hill (and possibly a third there was influenced by him), one for Dr R.E. McClelland was in Grose Wold across the Nepean River from Richmond, and another, seen in family photographs, perhaps in Double or Elizabeth Bay.

A recent visit to Hunters Hill shows one garden survives in greatly modified form. Two other gardens he may have influenced there are also today highly modified by subdivision, building and paving extensions. It is not known if his Grose Wold garden survives.

There is also the garden at Eumalga, 48 Woolwich Road, Hunters Hill, a property that belonged to the Palmer family, good friends of Max and Maude Shelley. Today Eumalga's house and immediate garden are rare intact survivors of the Victorian era, although the western part of the block was subdivided off, probably in the 1930s and thus the garden there that may have been designed by Shelley was lost.

Design style

What first attracted me to Shelley's work were his formal designs in comparison with those of his contemporaries in publishing, Edna Walling, Betty Begg and Molly Shannon, who on the whole favoured the informal. He had rectilinear, or geometric, bed and path forms, separate garden areas divided by straight or tightly curving paths, dry stone walls, ovoid curved bed edges, and service areas to the rear. A typical Max comment about a plan was 'and every modern convenience to the rear'.

He urged that built garden features should be moderate, beautiful, suitable, and sympathetic to the architect's house design. His writings promoted garden seats, especially in shady positions and out of the public gaze, garden ponds (as both

'charming and useless'), and he suggested pergolas could go anywhere, but were best leading from a side door to a distant part of the garden.

In terms of soft landscaping Shelley favoured Lombardy poplars as trees for the 'front row' in gardens, and in pairs to end a vista. He also used olive hedges (as did Professor E.G. Waterhouse of Eryldene). Max was neither afraid of using trees liberally, nor of demarcating space with bold sweeping paths, pergolas or hedges.

Like Walling, Shelley advocated covering bare house and garden walls and surrounding windows with trellised and scented creepers - climbing roses, clematis, honeysuckle, sweet peas and banksia roses.

Shelley promoted lattice to frame views off verandahs or porches, cover paling dividing fences and support vines such as passionfruit or loganberry and wisteria. He suggested geraniums and nasturtiums trailing from window boxes to soften house walls.

Max had firm views on paving and paths. Like Walling he favoured crazy paving over concrete for paths (and patios), irregular in pattern with mixed materials, or herringbone/basket weave brick paths, gravel or bitumen, laid irregularly enough to allow alyssum, lobelia, moss and similar to colonise cracks. One article on paving featured a path of multiple materials - stone, brick and roofing tiles laid on their side, in a geometric pattern. He warned that paths should not meander with no purpose, cut across a lawn, break up a flowerbed unsymmetrically, or end in a blank wall. He also wrote of the merits of the grass path, and promoted lawns, advocating large sweeps to give a spacious appearance.

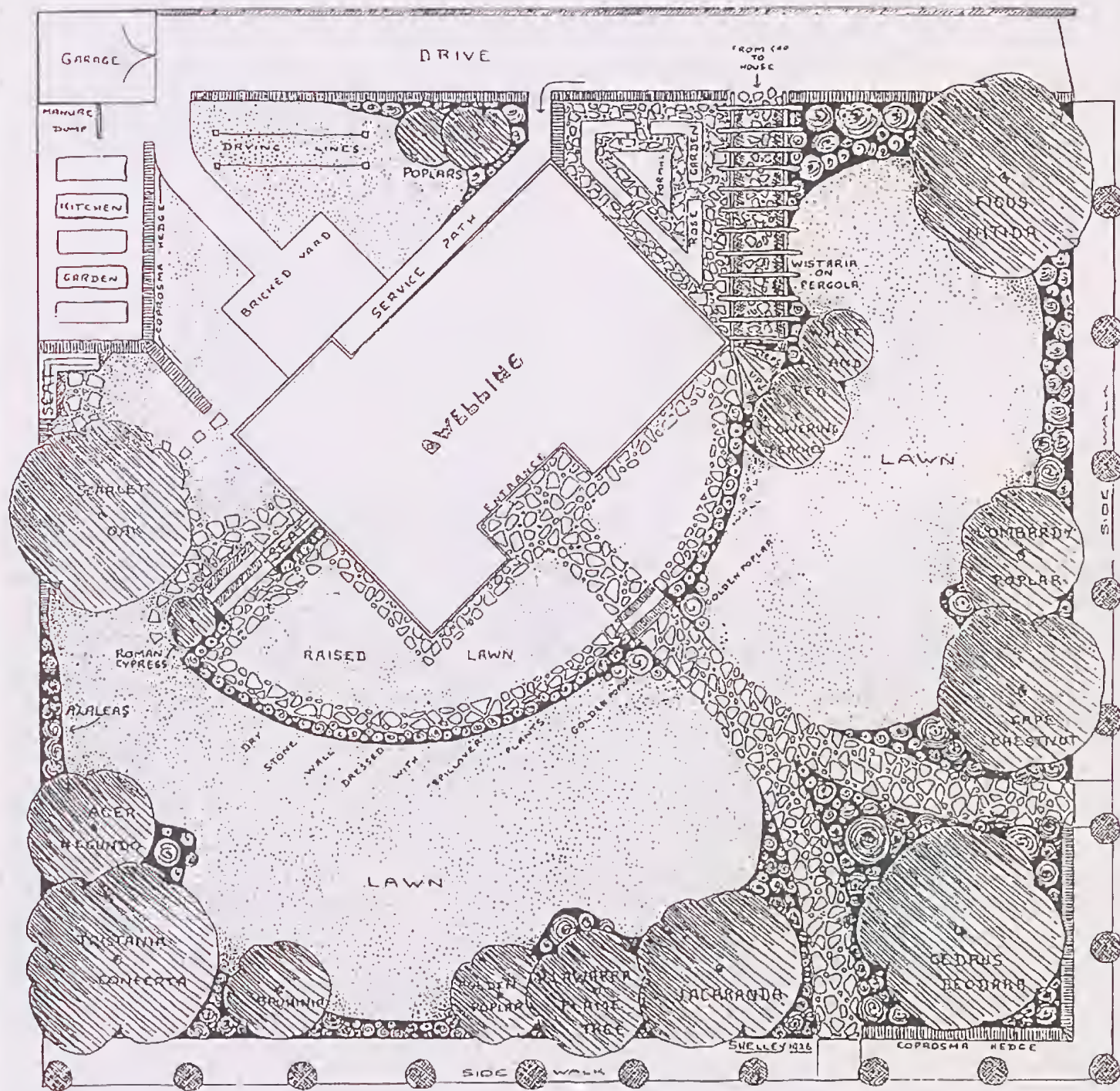
Shelley was not insular, often referring to overseas gardens to promote design ideas: for example the Rockefeller garden in New York.

A Design for the Larger Garden.

By M. R. Shelley, Landscape Architect.

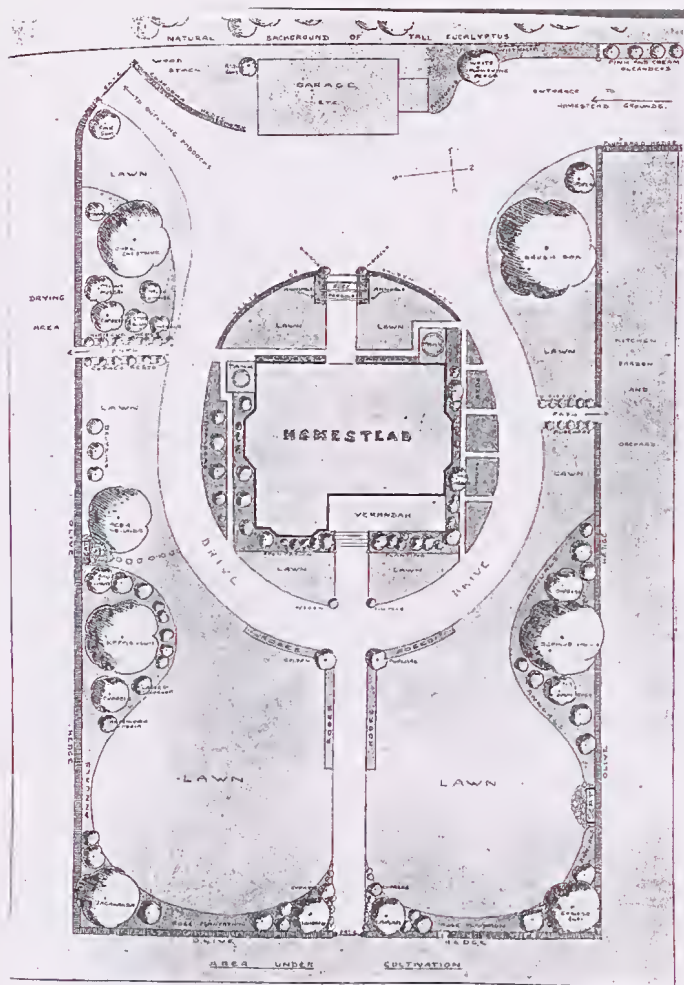
A GARDEN of generous proportions, suitable to blocks of 100 feet square and upwards is dealt with in this month's design. It is, necessarily, a corner situation and the advantage of having two separate front entrance gates is demonstrated. This feature, although not a necessity, would create great charm, while distant views and objects of interest would be greatly increased. The broad flagstones lead in gentle con-

verging curves to a common objective—stone steps in the dry wall of the raised lawn—steps partially hidden in masses of soft shrubs and prostrate perennials. The dry wall should also be dressed and clothed with Lotus, Catmint, Thunbergia, Nasturtiums, Purple Lantana and the brilliant Mesembryanthemums with a desirable backing of a one-foot high hedge of Rosemary, Golden Ligustrum or Olive to serve the double purpose of giving a perfect background for the wall plants

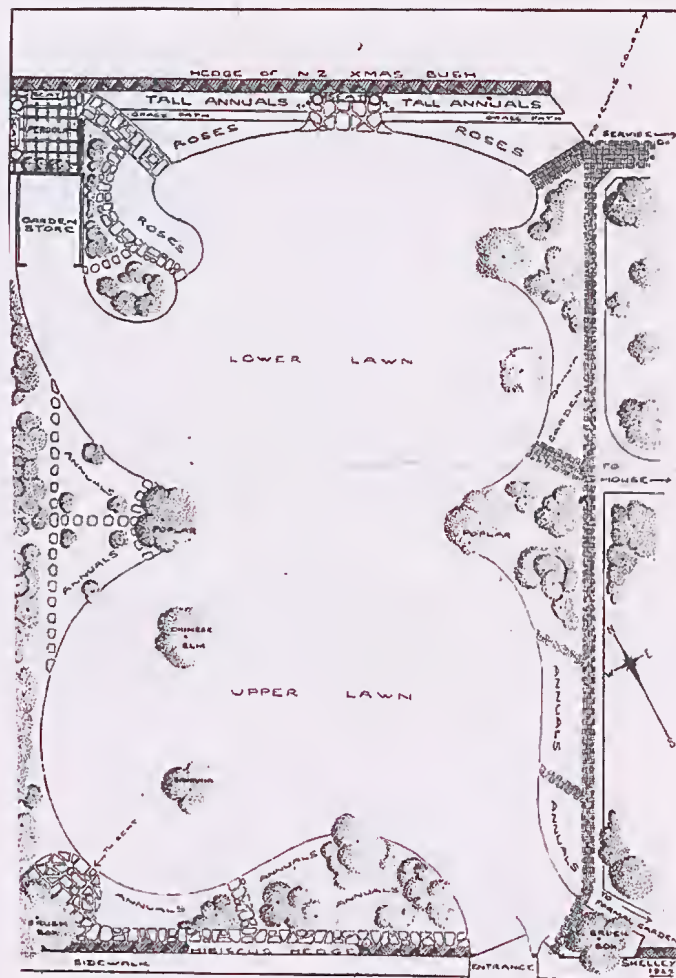


Another bold, formal plan with extensive rockwork, pergola and large plantings inside a coprosma hedge.

Source: *The Garden*, 1927



A garden plan for Dr R.E. McClelland at Grose Wold across the Nepean River from Richmond, 1927. Note circular drive requested by Dr McClelland.



An informal garden designed and laid out at Hunter's Hill, 1927.



Eumalga, 48 Woolwich Rd., Hunter's Hill - where Shelley may have added the informal garden to the west (see plan above right). Today that land is subdivided but the Victorian front garden remains.



Shelley's parents' garden, Vynui, Mount Street, Hunters Hill, in the 1930s. Note Kochias and Celosias and the use of lattice screens. Sadly this garden is today gone and the house is now used as a private hospital.

Plants recommended by Shelley

Abutilon	Chinese lanterns
Acacia spp.	Wattles
Acer negundo	Box elder
Azalea spp.	Azaleas
Bauhinia purpurea	Bauhinia
Brachychiton	Illawarra flame tree
Buddleia veitchiana	Buddleia
Callistemon spp.	Callistemons
Calodendron capense	Cape chestnut
Cassia candolleana	Abyssinian senna bush
Cassia didymobotrya	Senna bush
Cedrus deodara	Himalayan cedar
Ceropetalum gummiferum	NSW Christmas bush
Cestrum aurantiacum	Golden cestrum
Chamaelaucium uncinatum	Geraldton wax flower
Coprosma lucens	Coprosma
Crataegus crenulata	Evergreen hawthorn
Cuphea sp.	Cigar flower
Deutzia spp.	Wedding bells
Dombeya spp.	Dombeya
Erythina crista-galli	Cockspur coral tree
Ficus macrophylla	Moreton Bay fig
Ficus nitida	
Genista andreaana	Broom/gorse
Genista fragrans	Broom/gorse
Hibiscus spp.	Hibiscus
Hydranges spp.	Hydrangeas
Hymenosporum flavum	Native frangipani
Jacaranda mimifolium	Jacaranda
Lagerstroemia	Crepe myrtle
Lantana 'Chelsea Gem'	Lantana
Lantana sellowiana	Lantana
Ligustrum elegantissima	Privet
Ligustrum ovalifolium	
variegatum	Golden privet
Lophostemon confertus	Brush box
Magnolia spp.	Magnolias
Metrosideros tomentosa	Pohutukawa (NZ Christmas tree)
Nerium sp.	Oleander
Philadelphus	Mock orange

Pinus sp.	Pines
Plumbago capensis	Plumbago
Podocarpus elatus	Illawarra plum
Poinsettia pucherrima	Poinsettia
Populus nigra 'Italica'	Lombardy poplar
Populus canadensis 'Aurea'	Golden poplar
Prostanthera ovalifolia	Mint-bush
Prunus moseri	Purple leafed plum
Prunus persica 'Albo-Plena'	White flowering peach
Prunus persica duplex	Pink flowering peach
Quercus coccinea	Scarlet oak
Rondeletia amoena	Rondeletia
Rosmarinus sp.	Rosemary
Schefflera	Umbrella tree
Schinus molle	Pepper tree
Spartium junceum	Spanish broom
Spiraea spp.	May
Stenocarpus sinuatus	Queensland firewheel tree
Syzygium sp.	
(Acmena, Eugenia)	Lilly-Pilly
Tamarix formosa	Pink cypress
Tibouchina sp.	Lasiandra
Ulmus parvifolia	Chinese elm
Weigela sp.	Weigela
Wisteria spp.	Wisterias

Characteristic Shelley Planting Features

Roses and rose pergolas
 Rose and iris gardens
 Paths edged with low hedges of hibiscus
 Natural backgrounds of tall eucalypts
 Tall annuals and perennials
 Herbaceous borders
 Privets in tubs
 Hedges
 Coprosma
 Plumbago
 Golden privet
 African olive

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A garden Shelley must have worked on, perhaps in Sydney's eastern suburbs.
Note sandstone cliff, use of materials, steps retaining walls, and New Zealand cabbage trees in pots.
Photos: From a Shelley family album. Courtesy Rosemary Ross

Some mysteries remain . . . detectives wanted

Another mystery garden, perhaps in Sydney's eastern suburbs, which Max must have worked on is seen in photos that show a sandstone cliff with steps, paths and planting recently put in. Note the New Zealand cabbage tree in the pot and the range of materials used. I am keen to hear from anyone who knows of Shelley gardens, his works or advice still existing, either in the Sydney area or elsewhere.

Please contact me:

reads@heritage.nsw.gov.au

or by mail, c/o

Australian Garden History Society,
Gate Lodge,
100 Birdwood Avenue,
Melbourne, Vic. 3004.

Sources & co-research assistance:

Thanks to Megan Martin of the Historic Houses Trust for diverse leads and information, Chris Betteridge for finding out 'M.R.' was Max, Howard Tanner for the tip on Boomerang, and Colleen Morris for information and the AGHS Research Forum at which further leads arose - a great boost.

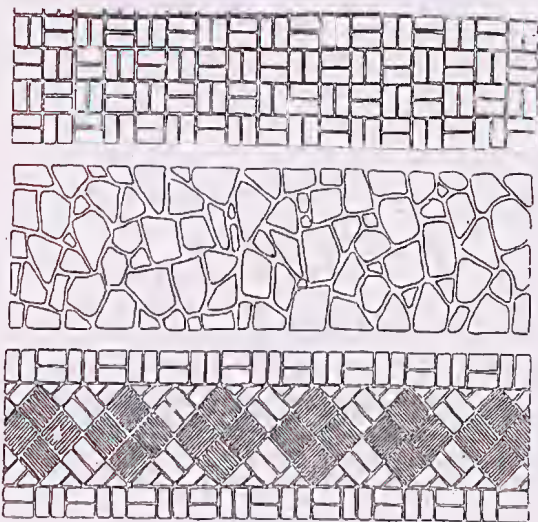
Special thanks to Rosemary Ross, only child of Max Shelley, for encouragement, photographs and much helpful background and to Zeny Edwards, biographer of Cazneaux and Hardy Wilson, for confirmation of Boomerang and photographs. And to the *Sydney Morning Herald's* Column 8 for allowing me to find these two women in the ether - quite a breakthrough!

Thanks also to Sally Garrett for permission to reprint the Cazneaux pictures, and to Duncan Mount for permission to visit Boomerang lately.

A Max Shelley Bibliography

Articles by Shelley

- M.R. Shelley, 'Trees and shrubs – for the cottage garden', *The Home* February 1, 1926, p.4.
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- M.R. Shelley, 'The herbaceous border', *The Garden Magazine*, May 1, 1926, p.227 – includes a plan.
- M.R. Shelley, 'A design for the larger garden', *The Garden Magazine*, August 1, 1926, p.373 – includes a plan.
- M.R. Shelley, 'Colour planning in the garden', *The Garden Magazine*, August 1, 1926, pp. 411-412.
- M.R. Shelley, 'A garden design', *The Home*, September 1, 1926, p.88 – includes a plan with an extended caption.
- M.R. Shelley, 'Edgings', *The Garden Magazine*, September 1, 1926, p.449.
- M. R. Shelley, 'A garden design', *The Commonwealth Home*, January 1, 1927, p.47 – includes a plan with an extended caption.
- M. R. Shelley, 'On a 75 foot plot', *The Commonwealth Home*, February 1, 1927, p.47 – includes a plan with an extended caption (his own garden, Coolibah).
- 'Lattice work and crazy paving', *The Commonwealth Home*, March 1, 1927, pp.5-6 [attributed to Shelley].
- 'The grass path', *The Commonwealth Home*, March 1, 1927, p.46 [attributed to Shelley].
- M. R. Shelley, 'Homestead grounds designed and laid out for Dr R. E. McClelland, Grose Wold, N.S.W.', *The Commonwealth Home*, March 1, 1927, p.47 – includes a plan with an extended caption.
- M. R. Shelley, 'An informal garden, designed and laid out at Hunter's Hill, N.S.W.', *The Commonwealth Home*, April 1, 1927, p.47 – includes a plan with an extended caption (possibly Eumalga).
- M. R. Shelley, 'A garden for the corner block', *The Commonwealth Home*, May 2, 1927, p.47 – includes a plan with an extended caption.
- M. R. Shelley, 'Paths and paving', *The Commonwealth Home*, July 1, 1927, p.49 – includes diagrams.



PATHS AND PAVING.

By M. R. Shelley, Landscape Architect.

For this month's landscape article three examples of brick, stone, and shingle tile-paths have been drawn. The principal reason is to try and popularise these simple, harmonious pavings in place of concrete in any shape, form, or colour.

- Max Shelley, 'The simple garden of today', *Safe Home Planning*, published by Bebarfalds Ltd., 1927, pp.101-103 – includes plan.
- Max Shelley, 'The simple garden of today', *Garden Gossip*, November 1928, pp.23-24 – includes photograph [reprint of article published in Bebarfalds' *Safe Home Planning* minus the plan].
- Max Shelley, 'Sandstone paving', *Garden Gossip*, November, 1928, p.57 – includes photographs.
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- Max Shelley, 'Odd items we could avoid in garden composition', *Garden Gossip and Home Lover of Australia*, June 1929, p.34.

Max Shelley Publications

MAX (M.R. Shelley) Rose List 1929

11 pp. [ML 635.9333/11]

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- Betteridge, C., Musecape & Morris, C., *A Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in NSW*, September 1996, Australian Heritage Commission NEGP funded project administered by Burnley College, the University of Melbourne.
- Photo feature on Boomerang, photographs by Harold Cazneaux, *The Home*, February, 1929, pp.38-43 (attributed to Nora Cooper).
- 'Florists' art completes the State Theatre', *Garden Gossip and Home Lover of Australia*, July 1929, p.38.
- Nora Cooper, 'A mansion on Elizabeth Bay: some pen and camera pictures of one of the most interesting homes in Sydney', *The Australian Home Beautiful*, April 1, 1930, pp.11-17, 57-58 – photographs by H.C.

Max Shelley advertisements (note his changing title in these advertisements)

- *The Home*
January 1926-November 1930
(Garden design & construction, ...later Garden Architect, Seed and Plant Expert, Florist).
- *The Garden Magazine*
May-September 1926
(Landscape architect).
- *The Garden and Home Maker of Australia*
August 1926-January 1927
(Garden designer and contractor).
- *The Commonwealth Home*
January-July 1927
(Garden designer and contractor, Landscape Architect, later Seed & Plant Expert, Florist).
- *Garden Gossip* **later** *Garden Gossip and Home Lover of Australia*
September 1928 - December 1929
(Landscape Architect, Expert garden advice, Garden designer, Seed & plant merchant, Florist).

Stuart Read works for the NSW Heritage Office identifying, assessing and advising on the management of historic gardens, parks and cultural landscapes. He trained as a landscape architect and horticulturist in New Zealand, and is a member of the National Management Committee of the Australian Garden History Society.

VALETE

MARGOT KNOX

Much of Margot Knox's early garden history relates to her time in Eltham where she and her husband, environmental architect Alistair Knox, built a large mud-brick house on several acres of bushland. As a twenty-year-old she worked with landscape designer Ellis Stones; it was during this period that she developed her lifelong skill of paving. Always an 'improver', initially at Eltham and finally at the internationally recognised Mosaic Garden in Hawthorn, Margot was very much a hands-on gardener.

As a young painter in Eltham, her early work reflected a love of the landscape in which she lived and worked. In 1985, both painting and gardening took a completely new direction when she moved to the Baptist Church Hall on the corner of Rathmines Road, Hawthorn. Here she transformed a concrete jungle into a visual feast. From broad acres to mere metres meant a considerable adjustment in the way she would design and manage a modest space. Rather than opt for the predictable small cottage garden or a bonsai bush look, she began a process that would engage her for the rest of her life.

The work of the great Brazilian landscape designer, Roberto Burle Marx was influential in Margot's garden design. Like him, she used plants to create sculptural forms preferring shape and texture over colour. Burle Marx believed that 'To create gardens is a marvellous art - possibly one of the oldest manifestations of art.' In her own work as in his, Margot believed that 'we should always try to understand the mutations and variations in nature, and the light, sounds and perfumes that stir our emotions.'

At the heart of The Mosaic Garden was a continuing process of innovative design, both in its creator's choice of foliage and her understanding of colour combinations, space and plants. This garden enchanted thousands of people who visited over the years, through the Australian Open Garden Scheme. Many visitors made annual pilgrimages to observe the progress of the garden.

Margot held her last solo exhibition at the Dickerson Gallery in 2001 - a series of stylised garden paintings, many depicting Vita Sackville-West at work in her Sissinghurst garden. She left a legacy which the garden writer Anne Latreille refers to as 'The best garden I have seen in Australia.'

Gwen Ford

HARRY OAKMAN

Born in Belgium in 1906, Henry Octave Cyril Vereecke's early life was hard. At the age of 2, his mother died and his father Joseph took him to England. In 1920 they came to Australia where young Henry changed his name to Harry Oakman. Life was tough for the young man and his father. The two were forced to trap rabbits, sell them door-to-door and 'hit the road', not having a place to call home.

Studies in agriculture, horticulture and landscape architecture led Harry to his first position with the Kuringai Municipal Council on Sydney's North Shore, then with the Newcastle City Park Department. From 1947 to 1962 he was Manager, Department of Parks with the Brisbane City Council. During this time Oakman built 120 sports ovals, developed wonderful floral displays along the median strips on Gympie

Road, was responsible for the huge displays in Brisbane's CBD and redesigned and constructed large areas of the City of Brisbane Botanic Garden and Queen's Gardens².

Through his writing, particularly *Gardening in Queensland* (1958) and *Tropical and Sub-Tropical Gardening* (1975), Oakman led many gardeners to appreciation and use of showy exotic plants. He was responsible for much of Brisbane's early street tree planting favouring *Bauhinia variegata* with its orchid-like blooms and summer shade. Oakman never watered his lawns and applied minimal water to his shrub borders. Indeed the overuse of water in the home garden was one of his favourite subjects.

In 1963 Oakman resigned from the Brisbane City Council to take up a position with the National Development Commission in Canberra where he took charge of the Landscape Division. He retired to Brisbane in 1973.

Ross McKinnon³

BERNHARDT SCHUBERT

On the 13th of May, the nursery industry and the Australian plant movement lost one of its great personalities with the death of Bernhardt Schubert, at Yandina, Queensland, following a long illness.

Schubert's Nursery, now run by son Bernard, and display garden at Noble Park Victoria, provided both native plants and inspiration to those landscape designers specialising in Australian work. Ben (as he was known then, a nick-name he eschewed in later life) and his first wife Dulcie, were ever encouraging to those wanting to try Australian plants in their gardens, and to designers venturing into this fairly new field. Their generosity with advice and knowledge was well known.

The wonderful, natural-looking display garden (long gone) inspired both amateurs and professionals and played a tremendously important part in helping Australian plant enthusiasts along their way. It was an opportunity to see many native plants growing together as a whole landscape rather than as a garden of 'specimens'. The garden had been inspired by Ben and Dulcie's knowledge of 'the bush' and borrowed nothing from European horticulture. My own debt to the Schuberts and the display garden runs deep, as the enthusiasm engendered there set me on the most important aspect of my career. Ellis Stones, who designed the front part of the garden, Gordon Ford, Rodger and Gwen Elliot and Paul Thompson, were but a few of the many designers who also gained much from their association with the Schuberts.

Early in my career, I was given encouragement and guidance by a number of people in the landscaping and nursery trades: the generosity and good will of the Schuberts stands high in this company. 'Ben' and Dulcie were a warm, caring couple and today 'young' Bernard carries on their legacy. The grand daughters are also taking an interest in the nursery beside their father while Bernard's sister Glennis has forged a fine career of her own. Bernhardt is survived by his second wife, Gloria.

Glen Wilson

1 This is an abbreviation of an obituary from *The Age*, April 2002

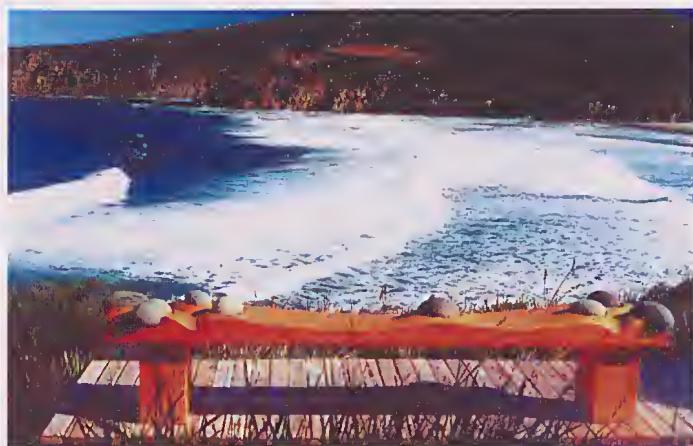
2 See Jan Seto and Jeannie Sim, 'Queen's Gardens, Brisbane', *Australian Garden History*, Vol.4, No.6 May/June, 1993 pp. 9-11

3 Harry Oakman left his considerable library and slide collection to Ross McKinnon, A.M., the Curator of Brisbane Botanic Gardens. Ross will present a paper, with Ray Steward and Malcolm Dunzli, on the life and work of Harry Oakman at the AGHS Annual Conference in Brisbane in next year.



In Imagination is the Preservation of Wilderness

Speaker: Peter Adams Friday 4th October, 2002 1.30 p.m.



One of Peter Adams' benches at Windgrove Peace Garden, Nubeena, Tasmania.
Photo: Peter Adams

If one person offers the essence of the theme 'Gardens of the Imagination' at the forthcoming Annual Conference in Hobart in October, it is undoubtedly Peter Adams. A speaker on the opening day, he will also welcome visitors to his remarkable garden at Nubeena on Sunday. **Christine Reid** gives a tantalising glimpse of one of the highlights of the weekend.

Peter Adams' home, Windgrove, lies at the end of a long winding drive through the cultivated paddocks and native eucalypts of the Tasman Peninsula. From the car, every now and again, you can catch glimpses of silvery sea and sky.

It is only when you arrive at Windgrove that a vast expanse of sea and sky opens out before you. Magnificent views across Storm Bay to Tasmania's south-west spread out with the waves of the aptly-named Roaring Beach below the house lending their sound to the endless winds of these latitudes.

Adams, a sculptor and an American by birth, has lived in Tasmania for the past 15 years, inspired by the local environment. "For me, Tasmania offers a connection to an ancient landscape. And the natural elements – water, air and light – together with the lack of pollution make it a wonderful place to work."

Once a run-down grazing property, Windgrove has been extensively replanted with local coastal species. Nearly 3,000 banksias, hakeas, she-oaks (*Allocasuarina stricta*), silver-leaved peppermint eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus tenuiramis*), and native grasses have been planted to restore the vegetation to its original character as well as enhance a sense of landscape in harmony with its natural surroundings.

Within this landscape, Peter's magnificently crafted wood and stone benches are carefully sited to encourage reflection and contemplation. Some are inscribed with quotations from Shakespeare, Thoreau and Peter's own thoughts on the landscape and environment – and our responsibilities to it. Created from Tasmanian rainforest timbers and local beach stones, they comprise an eloquent series entitled *Benches for Dialogue*.

Impressive in size – some are 2.5m long – they are designed for use both inside and out, and are used as objects to sit on, for contemplation, discussion or simply as part of the natural world. Peter explains: "They constantly remind us, as we sit on them, of the natural world's awesome beauty."

The 1.5km walk around the property – from bench to bench – can be likened to the concept of the Stations of the Cross. (In religious art, Christ's journey into Calvary is usually divided into 14 scenes or Stations). Peter says "Although I'm not a Catholic, there are 14 stops or stations on this headland where you can sit, talk, reflect or meditate and then walk for a couple of kilometres through a range of different beautiful bush scenes and fabulous coastal views. I intentionally create vistas by the placement of the benches." For Peter each bench is an altar of sorts. "I design them with the hope that those who use these benches will have a sensory, inspirational experience."

An added inspirational experience can also be found in Peter's more recent work, a stone memorial. Brilliantly sited on an axis between land and sea, it is yet another wonderful sculpture blending stone, water and wood in such a way that it has the appearance of an ancient archaeological site.

"At Windgrove, I have highlighted certain areas and focussed attention in a certain direction, just as you do in conventional landscaping. I believe that walking in the landscape, or visiting or making a garden, is healing to one's soul. A garden is the meeting place between soul and spirit."

Christine Reid is a well-known garden writer who regularly contributes to *Gardens Illustrated*, *Country Style* and *Your Garden*. She is currently writing Australian entries for the forthcoming revised edition of the *Oxford Companion to Gardens*, and she believes Windgrove is one of Australia's outstanding contemporary gardens.

For the Bookshelf

Gardens in China

Peter Valder, 2002, Florilegium, 400 pp.
Hardback with dustcover
RRP \$90 ISBN 1 876314 13 3.

Reviewed by **John Dudley**

It is said of Li Po the famous Tang poet that having composed a poem, he would recite it before an illiterate elderly woman acquaintance. If she liked the poem he would publish it. The message is clear – keep it simple. Like the elegant works of Li Po, one of the charms of Peter Valder's book *Gardens of China* is that it is written in concise unaffected language. His powers of description, like those of Li Po, enable us to visualise and enjoy aspects of China past and present.



The philosophy behind Chinese gardens remains as it was centuries ago and, in brief, is to recreate nature within the limitations of an urban environment. Hence the use of artifice, as the author puts it, to form mountains out of rocks; the use of lakes and streams; the lack of symmetry and of formal garden beds. Given the noise, pollution and overcrowding in most industrial cities and towns, these walled gardens must be havens of peace and serenity to Chinese urban dwellers.

The book describes two hundred gardens including imperial gardens and tombs; gardens of former official and scholars; public parks; botanical gardens and historic sites. They range the length and breadth of China from subtropical Dali on the borders of Myanmar to icy Shen Yeng in the far north.

The first chapter describes recorded Western contacts with China starting with Marco Polo's visit across Asia at the time of Kublai Khan around 700 years ago. The Portuguese began trading with China in the sixteenth century and, from then on, European maritime nations and Christian missionaries revealed to the West a great Oriental civilisation including its gardens. The book tells of the visits of early explorers, botanists and plant gatherers together with diplomatic initiatives and the destruction wrought by Western imperialism.

Peter Valder has made over ten visits to China in the last twenty years. He has divided the bulk of his book into five regions namely Centre, North, South, East and West based on Chinese cosmology. Each garden is introduced by an account of its location and history followed by a description of its plants and physical features. The text is supported by some 500 photographs of garden scenes and plants taken by the author. There are also maps, reproductions of paintings and a fascinating number of sepia photographs dating from before the end of the 19th century and from the early 1900s.

Throughout the book one reads about the rise and fall of dynasties, popular rebellions and local uprisings all of which have caused the destruction of palaces, temples and co-incidentally gardens. We have witnessed this in our own time with the abominable excesses of the Red Guards. Fortunately the present regime, like others before it, has seen fit to restore and rebuild, but much priceless heritage has been lost.

Like Peter Valder's previous two books *Gardens of China* has gained much international acclaim. Since it is a book on gardens and not about people there are few references to the many curators, gardeners and Chinese enthusiasts the author must have met over the years. He would also have learned much about Chinese gardening methods. Given the occasional evidence of a fine wit, perhaps at some time in the future we can hope for a more personal account of his travels and experiences.

Gardens of China is a scholarly book and one cannot help but be impressed by the enormous amount of painstaking research undertaken by Peter Valder obviously over many years. The book is a delight to read and a mine of information for garden enthusiasts, historians and, not least, for anyone interested in gardens and China.

John Dudley was born in Shanghai in 1931 and came to Australia just before the attack on Pearl Harbour. He has been associated with Chinese affairs most of his adult life and for many years worked in Radio Australia's Chinese Broadcasting Service. He is also known as a painter and is a member of the long established Twenty Melbourne Painters Society.

Chicago Botanic Garden Encyclopedia of Gardens: History and Design (3 vols)

Edited by Candice A. Shoemaker
Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, Chicago,
London, 2001
rrp. \$US 385.00 ISBN 1 57958 173 0.

Reviewed by **Allan Correy**

Professor Shoemaker and her editorial team are to be congratulated on compiling, within an amazingly short period of three years, such a scholarly and handsomely produced publication, which must surely be regarded as one of the finest works of its kind to date.

Initiated by the Chicago Botanic Garden, the *Encyclopedia of Gardens* is a major new reference work, which will be invaluable to landscape architects, garden designers, horticulturists, historians,

academics, students, and all those interested in garden history and design. It complements the already indispensable *Oxford Companion to Gardens*, and will no doubt supplement the forthcoming *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*.

Nearly 230 international authors have contributed almost 600 essays, ranging in length from 1000 to 5000 words. Entries are of four main types: people, individual gardens, countries and regions, and specific topics, such as styles, tools and techniques. Each entry within each of these types follows a similar format, which is useful for research purposes and for making comparisons. For example, entries on designers comprise a critical essay, followed by a brief biography, a select list of designs, selected publications by the individual and a list of further readings. Essays on particular gardens are preceded by details of their specific location, and followed by a chronological synopsis of significant dates relating to their design, and a list of further reading. Most of the entries on countries and regions are long enough to furnish a comprehensive overview of the evolution of their cultural landscapes, and all include a useful list of references. There are some interesting studies, ranging from 'allotment', through 'chinoiserie' and 'modernism', to 'women as gardeners', each with useful references, in the area of specific topics.

Each volume has many high quality, large black and white illustrations, which are well placed in relation to descriptions in the text. In addition, a block of beautiful full-page and double-page colour plates of significant gardens is bound into the middle of each volume. The layout and printing throughout is of the highest standard, making reading a real pleasure. There is a complete list of all entries at the beginning of each volume, and a comprehensive index and notes on contributors at the end of Volume Three.

Although it is not surprising to find this Encyclopedia, in the editor's own words, 'undeniably Eurocentric', it is disappointing that the Antipodes are not better represented – there are only seven essays relating to Australia, and New Zealand fares worse, with four. It is unfortunate that no Australian was included on the Advisory Board, since this has meant that some very important entries have been omitted, further highlighting the critical need for the *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*.

It is always difficult to make an overall assessment of the accuracy of entries in an encyclopedia. While I am familiar with many of the gardens and designers from North America, the UK and parts of Europe, I have little knowledge of other countries, so I have focused my attention on the Australian essays. Given the space available for Australia, it surely would have been more appropriate to have included a single entry, encompassing all the major botanic gardens, instead of only one, the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. One wonders why a relatively insignificant garden, such as Forest Lodge in South Australia, is included when Canberra, the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, and Centennial Park Sydney are not, and why do such important designers as Griffin and Guilfoyle not appear at all?

Regrettably, there are a number of errors which cannot go unchallenged: for instance, Norfolk Island pine is referred to as a native species (it is endemic to Norfolk Island); Governor Phillip is said to have had cleared nine hectares to establish the first Government farm (the area was '9 Acres in Corn'); there is a reference to Sydney Town at Farm Cove (the settlement was around the adjacent Sydney Cove); the village at Mooroolbark, developed by Edna Walling, is spelt 'Blicking Vale' (instead of Bickleigh Vale); and of the 200 gardens designed by Walling most are said to be in Melbourne (actually few of her gardens are in Melbourne). Despite these criticisms, the *Encyclopedia of Gardens* will, I'm

sure, remain the definitive reference for garden and landscape scholars for many years to come. The price will no doubt deter many individuals, but, hopefully, librarians at major universities, colleges, schools and local councils will find the funds to add this work to their collections.

Allan Correy, a retired landscape architect and academic, is at present a visiting lecturer in *History of Australian Landscape Architecture*, in the Faculty of the Built Environment, University of New South Wales. He has contributed essays on Jocelyn Brown and Paul Sorensen in the *Encyclopedia of Gardens*.

Yesterday's Gardens

Victor Crittenden, 2002, Mulini Press, 276 pp.
Hardback

RRP \$50 ISBN 0949910 90 2

Reviewed by Nina Crone

In his introduction to *Yesterday's Gardens*, really the 2nd edition of *Australian Gardening Books* first published in 1986, Victor Crittenden writes 'I have given the work a new title . . . This will no doubt confuse future bibliographers.' Indeed it has already confused people Victor. At least two people referred it to me as a reprint in hardback! Garden history enthusiasts and bibliophiles will be delighted with the new revised edition to replace their collection of well-thumbed, now loose pages of the loved yellow papeback original edition.



Yesterday's Gardens with its coloured hard cover maintains the distinctive character of the black and white illustrations of its predecessor but adds another 43 or so books (among them works on fruit trees) to Part II, the Bibliography of Australian Garden Books. Part I, the History of Australian Gardening Books has been expanded to take account of new research over the past 16 years.

Readers will appreciate the sub-headings that readily identify the key writers of each period. There is a fuller coverage of each colony/state notably South Australia and Queensland, and a better balance between some subjects, for example Daniel Bunce and William Guilfoyle. Recent research such as the debate on whether James Sinclair or Clement Hodgkinson designed the Fitzroy Gardens in Melbourne is mentioned.

And there is a little mystery. How did a number of errors (tragedy, popy, business and bedside) creep into captions between the editions? Perhaps they were dictated over the telephone rather than set by computer. Small criticism. Apart from its inestimable value as a reference, the book is a good read. It bowls along at a cheery pace, evidences real humanity and always conveys the enthusiasm of the author for his subjects.

Nobelius Heritage Park.

An Illustrated Guide, Jo Jenkinson, Emerald Museum, 2002

Price \$15 + p.& p. Paperback, pp. 57

ISBN 0 9580215 0 3

Of all the siding names on the 'Puffing Billy' railway in the Dandenong Ranges outside Melbourne, Nobelius most intrigues many passengers. Jo Jenkinson effectively tells the story behind the name in her account of the world famous nursery established in 1886 by the Swedish immigrant Carl Axel Nobelius. His original land covered 650 hectares. From here he exported hundreds of thousands of fruit and ornamental trees to six continents and exotic species to all parts of Australia. The narrative moves on to

contemporary contributions made by the Linton family, Ernie Smith, and Gus Ryberg before the opening in 1988 of the Nobelius Heritage Park and its associated Emerald Museum. This well-researched and attractively illustrated publication adds immeasurably to a visit to an important and historic horticultural site.

Available by contacting the Secretary, Emerald Museum (03) 5968 5408 or P.O Box 578, Emerald, Vic. 3782. The museum is open Wednesday 10am to noon, Sunday 1pm to 5pm or by arrangement.



Botanic Gardens of Australia.

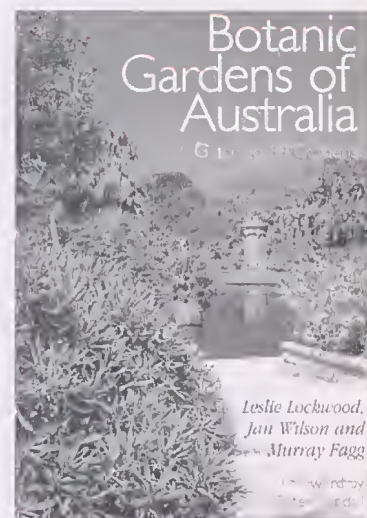
A Guide to 80 Gardens, Leslie Lockwood, Jan Wilson and Murray Fagg. New Holland, 2001.

rrp. \$29.95. Paperback, pp.176

ISBN 1 86436 543 9

It is no easy task to produce a fair and non-judgemental guidebook and as Leslie Lockwood states in the introduction 'This book only provides descriptions of 80 botanic gardens but we know there are over 100 gardens with some claim to such a title.' A list of the other 20 would have been an interesting inclusion, particularly as reference is made to different definitions of botanic gardens, yet the reader is not clear which definition the authors are using in their selection. Is it the view expressed during the 1871

Board of Enquiry into the Melbourne Botanic Gardens? It would also be useful to know which gardens are members of Botanic Gardens Conservation International. These are small criticisms of a publication that is eminently clear, has a good balance of historical and contemporary illustrations, a useful page of references, a comprehensive index, and web-site information. With its user-friendly style and convenient format, the book will serve tourists and travellers as an introduction to gardens they may otherwise by-pass. Recommended for the glove box in the car.



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Membership benefits: Society's official journal *Australian Garden History* 6 times a year. Garden related seminars and conferences. Lectures and garden visits. Specialist interstate and overseas garden tours. Opportunity to contribute to preserving gardens for posterity and other special benefits.

Items Of Interest

The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Garden History Society will be held in Hobart, at 8.30am on Saturday, 5 October 2002, at the Grand Chancellor Hotel. There will be three vacancies on the National Management Committee this year. Colleen Morris has served the maximum term of six years and must retire. Elizabeth Walker (current Treasurer) and Peter Watts (current Chairman) have served one term of three years and need to stand down but may choose to renominate. If nominations exceed the number of vacancies, ballot papers will be enclosed in this Journal.

New payment option for subscriptions

The AGHS has introduced Direct Debit as an additional option for the payment of membership subscriptions. From September this year Direct Debit Request Forms will be included with the usual membership renewal form.

An important contribution to garden history

Congratulations to Victor Crittenden, one of the first members of AGHS, who has brought out the 2nd Edition of his invaluable bibliography and survey of Australian garden writers for the period 1806 to 1950. The title is *Yesterday's Gardens*. (See p.25).

Booklet launch at Fifield, Yass

In September the Mayor of Yass launched a new booklet in the series on historic gardens of the ACT, Monaro, Riverina area. Written by Trisha Dixon following research by members of the local AGHS branch, *Fifield* joins *Durham Hall*, *Coolringdon* and *St Omer*.

Research forum

Initiated by the Sydney and Northern NSW, this activity is a valuable and vital part of the Australian Garden History Society. At the June gathering Silas Clifford-Smith presented a delightful survey of floral clocks; Warwick Mayne-Wilson fascinated the audience with the work of Arthur Costin at Queenscliff Headland; by discussing the town planning work of Major Sullivan a Police Magistrate at Port Stephens Colleen Morris introduced the audience to military gardens; and there was an interstate contribution from Richard Aitken on Scottish landscape gardener/garden architect Charles H.J. Smith who migrated to Kyneton and seeming oblivion.

Geelong's 21st century garden

Visitors are flocking to Geelong's 21st Century Garden. Reaching out into the public domain of Eastern Beach and the metropolitan precinct it celebrates contemporary design, local ecology, the seaside environment and the place of the Wathaurong people. Subsequent development will create a 'botanic corridor' linking the Geelong Botanic Gardens with the civic centre via Malop Street. These works follow the strongly endorsed Master Plan (1995) by Chris Dance Land Design Pty Ltd. A more detailed discussion of the development will feature in a later issue of this journal.

Thanks

Thanks to our band of regular packers – Di Ellerton, Jane Johnson, John and Beverley Joyce, Ann Miller, Sandi Pullman, Ann Rayment, Susan Reidy, Mike and Kaye Stokes, Georgina Whitehead - and to Tom Stokes who gave up part of his school holidays to help.

Mailbox

Help Wanted - Research into Chinese Cemetery Site

Terri McCormack writes hoping someone may be able to assist her.

I am a Sydney-based consultant historian who is seeking your assistance. I have been commissioned to provide a Conservation Management Plan for the Chinese Monument and environs at the old No. 1 General Cemetery at Rookwood Necropolis in Sydney. The monument was erected in 1877 by the Quong Sin Tong and is highly significant for its relationship to Chinese religious rituals and to the practice of exhuming bodies to be sent home to China. It consists of a central structure surrounded by a moat crossed by four bridges with iron railings. This old part of the cemetery is no longer used and is quite run down so that it is not really possible to evaluate the original design.

Part of my brief is to study the landscape and planting for this area and provide recommendations for restoration and conservation. I am hoping some of your members may have looked at this area of research. . . . Any ideas on the original layout and design of Chinese cemeteries during the nineteenth century would be most appreciated.

Terri McCormack (Ms),
PO Box 105, Balmain, NSW 2041 Ph. (02) 9810 4421
e-mail: terrimc@ozemail.com.au



Remnants of the Chinese monument at Rookwood Necropolis. Photo: Terri McCormack.

Diary Dates

SEPTEMBER

14 Saturday
ACT, Monaro, Riverina **Booklet Launch** The Historic Garden at Fifield, Yass, NSW by Nick Carmody, Mayor of Yass Shire. **3 pm at Fifield.** Contact: Maura O'Connor (02) 6262 1280 (BH)

South Australia, Hahndorf **Working Bee at The Cedars**

14-15 Saturday-Sunday
Victoria, Clunes & Creswick - **Discovery Weekend** led by Kevin Walsh. **'Creswick, Clunes, Talbot, Historic Landscapes in Early Spring'.** Enquiries: Mary Chapman (03) 9326 1992 (BH) or mchapman@alm.com.au

Primavera! A Celebration of Spring at Rippon Lea Estate featuring Echiums and Euphorbias, boating on the lake (weather permitting), old fashioned children's games (skittles and croquet) and fairies in the fernery, historic flower arrangements, tours of the 1880s basement kitchens, 19th century apple orchard, vegetable garden, specialist orchid display. **Como Historic House** will feature bluebells and Echiums, the spring to summer vegetable garden and historic flower arrangements.

15 Sunday
Sydney, Vaucluse House, **Up the Garden Path Lecture Series - Unravelling Landscapes: How do we know they have changed?** Dr Lynne McLoughlin from the Graduate School of Environment at Macquarie University takes the History Week theme 'Changing Landscapes' and asks how we know what the landscapes of Sydney were like when Europeans arrived. 10am to 12noon. \$15 (AGHS and HHT members), \$20 (non-members). Booking essential on (02) 9518 6866.

17 Tuesday
South Australia, Rose Park **Quiz** organised by Suzi Hertzberg. 7.30pm at Gartreels Hall, cnr Prescott Tce and Alexandra Ave, Rose Park. Cost \$4.

18 Wednesday
Victoria, Melbourne **Working Bee - Bishopscourt** (Melway 2G D3). Enquiries Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

21-22 Saturday-Sunday
Sydney, Gordon **'The Flower Borders at Eryldene'** 10am to 4pm at 17 McIntosh St, Gordon. Admission: \$10 to aid the conservation of the Eryldene garden.

26-29 Wednesday-Sunday
Sydney, Homebush **'The Gardening Australia Live Festival'** at Homebush Showground Sydney. Contact: Giles Edwards (02) 9982 7372 for more details.

27-30 September
Western Australia, Mt Barker - **Country Weekend** - Self-drive tour in the Mt Barker-Albany-Stirling Ranges area. Contact: Edith Young (08) 9457 4956

28 Saturday
Victoria, Bulla **Working Bee - Glenara** (Melway 177 C9) Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

28-29 Saturday-Sunday
Sydney, Gordon **'The Flower Borders at Eryldene'** 10am to 4pm at 17 McIntosh St, Gordon. Admission: \$10 to aid the conservation of the Eryldene garden.

OCTOBER

4-6 Friday-Sunday
Hobart - 23rd Annual National Conference **'Gardens of the Imagination'**

7 Monday
Hobart **Conference Garden Visit Day** (optional)

7-11 Monday-Friday
Post Conference Tour: **Tasmanian Gardens of the North & North-West**

12-13 Saturday-Sunday
Victoria, East Melbourne **Bishopscourt**, 120 Clarendon Street, **Garden Opening for Australia's Open Garden Scheme**, and plant stall, teas and sausage sizzle to raise funds for support the ongoing upkeep and restoration of this important Melbourne garden. (Melway 2G D3). Enquiries: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

16 Wednesday
Victoria, Melbourne **Bishopscourt** (Melway 2G D3). Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

17 Thursday
Sydney, Vaucluse House **Up the Garden Path Lecture Series: Your Garden - a surprising resource.** The Vaucluse House garden as seen by renowned floral artist, Susan Avery who will follow an illustrated talk about flower arrangements with a 'picking' tour of the Vaucluse House estate to create an imaginative floral creation from an early Spring garden. 10am to 12noon. \$15 (AGHS and HHT members), \$20 (non-members). Booking essential on (02) 9518 6866.

19-20 Saturday-Sunday
Victoria, Melbourne **Spring Plant Sale.** The Growing Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. Saturday from 10am till 4pm; Sunday from 10am till 3pm. Entry from E Gate, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra (Melway 2L B2). Enquiries: (03) 9836 2862.

26 Saturday
Victoria, Daylesford **Working Bee - Wombat Park** (Vic Roads 59 7D) Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

NOVEMBER

1-7 Friday-Thursday
Western Australia - **Festival of Country Gardens** - see www.montaza.com.au

2-3 Saturday-Sunday
Victoria, Kalorama **Seminar: 'Boronias, Correias and other Fragrant Friends'** to be held at the Kwarra Australian Plant Garden. For further details see 'Coming Events' at www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/kawarra

10 Sunday
Sydney, Vaucluse House **Up the Garden Path Lecture Series: Cut Down the Avenue!** Assisted by modern visual aids, Richard Heathcote (presenter of ABC TV's 'The New Eden') will propose necessary improvements to the Vaucluse House estate in the spirit of Humphry Repton. An exploration of Regency England landscape philosophy and garden style. 10am to 12 noon. \$15 (AGHS and HHT members), \$20 (non-members). Booking essential on (02) 9518 6866.

20 Wednesday
Victoria, Melbourne **Working Bee - Bishopscourt** (Melway 2G D3) Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

23 Saturday
ACT, Monaro, Riverina - **Christmas Party at Palarang, NSW.**

30 Saturday
Victoria, Beaufort **Working Bee - Belmont** (Vic Roads 57 8G) Contact: Helen Page (03) 9397 2260.

ADVANCE NOTICES

8 December
Western Australia, **Christmas Function.** Details to be advised.

2003

11-13 July
Brisbane - **24th Annual National Conference 'Tropical Pleasures'**